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Legislative Assembly Office

1998 Annual Report

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1998 Annual Report of the
Commonwealth Parliamentary Association
Alberta Branch



Alberta

Legislative Assembly of Alberta

The *Legislative Assembly Office* (LAO) is a non-partisan organization that provides support to the Members of the Legislative Assembly.

Office of the Speaker
325 Legislature Building
10800 – 97 Avenue
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6
(780) 427-2464

General Information (780) 427-2826
Web site: www.assembly.ab.ca

Office of the Clerk (780) 427-2478
801 Legislature Annex
9718 – 107 Street
Edmonton, AB T5K 1E4

House and Committee Services
Clerk Assistant's Office (780) 427-2480
801 Legislature Annex
9718 – 107 Street
Edmonton, AB T5K 1E4

Parliamentary Counsel (780) 422-4837
801 Legislature Annex
9718 – 107 Street
Edmonton, AB T5K 1E4

Sergeant-at-Arms (780) 422-9259
412 Legislature Building
10800 – 97 Avenue
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

Legislature Library
Reference Desk (780) 427-2473
216 Legislature Building
10800 – 97 Avenue
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

Co-operative Government Library Services (780) 427-3837
801 Legislature Annex
9718 – 107 Street
Edmonton, AB T5K 1E4

Public Information Branch
1001 Legislature Annex (780) 427-2826
9718 – 107 Street
Edmonton, AB T5K 1E4

Visitor Services (Tour Info) (780) 427-7362
Pedway Mall, Government Centre
10820 – 98 Avenue
Edmonton, AB T5K 2N6

Human Resources (780) 427-1364
901 Legislature Annex
9718 – 107 Street
Edmonton, AB T5K 1E4

Financial Management (780) 427-2477
901 Legislature Annex
9718 – 107 Street
Edmonton, AB T5K 1E4

Information Systems (780) 422-1680
902 Legislature Annex
9718 – 107 Street
Edmonton, AB T5K 1E4



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY ALBERTA

March 11, 1999

To the Members of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta:

I am pleased to submit the 10th annual report of the Legislative Assembly Office (LAO), as required by Standing Order 109, for the calendar year ended December 31, 1998.

This report also includes the second annual report of the Alberta Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.

As Speaker, it has been my pleasure to lead the staff of the Legislative Assembly Office since my election to this office on April 14, 1997. This talented team of men and women has enabled the LAO to maintain a high standard of service excellence which is well recognized in Commonwealth Parliamentary circles. They have a reputation for professionalism, co-operation, and all-round expertise that is well-deserved. Further, they have done Alberta proud every time they are called upon to host visiting parliamentarians. In 1998 they responded with distinction on four noteworthy occasions: the America Region Presidents Conference of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie (APF) in March, the visit of German parliamentarians in June, the visit of six officers and officials from the Legislative Assembly of Mpumalanga, South Africa, in November, and the Canadian Regional Seminar of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, also in November.

I thank Members of the Legislative Assembly who have presented papers or otherwise very ably represented our province at various interparliamentary conferences, and I thank all MLAs for supporting the Legislative Assembly Office and the work of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ken Kowalski".

Ken Kowalski, MLA
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly



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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY ALBERTA

March 11, 1999

To the Honourable the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta:

This is the 10th annual report of the Legislative Assembly Office and the second annual report of the Alberta Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.

These two reports outline in some detail the extent to which Alberta's Legislative Assembly has maintained leadership among the parliaments of Canada in terms of service excellence, innovation, and interparliamentary relations.

I am proud to be able to collaborate with the men and women who staff the Legislative Assembly Office. Time and again they have demonstrated their dedication, resourcefulness, and creativity both within their individual work units and in co-operation with staff from other areas within the LAO. They provide service to all Members of the Legislative Assembly at a very high level, often exceeding the high service expectations of the members themselves, and are always challenging themselves to improve.

This year Alberta was a strong contributor to interparliamentary conferences and other interparliamentary activities. All MLAs who participated in these activities enthusiastically confirmed that the professional development offered through these gatherings has proven beneficial to them individually, to the Assembly as a whole, and ultimately, to the people they represent. Staff who have assisted in interparliamentary relations or participated in such endeavours have similarly benefited.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'W.J. David McNeil'.

W.J. David McNeil
Clerk of the Legislative Assembly

Legislative Assembly Office

**Alberta Branch,
Commonwealth Parliamentary Association**

1998 Annual Reports



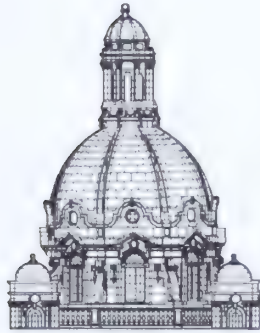
Alberta

Prepared for the Honourable Ken Kowalski
Speaker
Legislative Assembly of Alberta



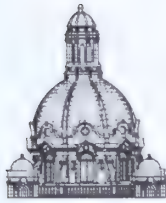
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Legislative Assembly Office

1998 Annual Report



Introduction

The Legislative Assembly Office: In Service to Alberta's Parliament

The origins of the Legislative Assembly Office of Alberta can be traced to the 14th century in England, when Parliament elected the first Speaker and appointed the first Clerk. Today the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly is the head of the office, and the Clerk is the Speaker's deputy. The Legislative Assembly Act of 1983 made the office's current name official.

The most common misconception about the Legislative Assembly Office is that it is a branch of the government and that its staff are government employees. However, in the parliamentary system the government is the executive branch and is responsible for applying and enforcing laws; the Legislative Assembly is the legislative branch and is responsible for establishing those laws. The Legislative Assembly Office provided various types of support to the entire Assembly, including MLAs of opposition and government parties alike.

Although the office is sometimes called the Speaker's department, it is not a government department. The Speaker does not belong to the cabinet and cannot be asked questions during Oral Question Period or participate in the Assembly's debates. The Speaker does have administrative authority and responsibility similar to that of the ministers of government departments, while the Clerk is the Speaker's chief administrative deputy and has authority and responsibility similar to that of a deputy minister of a government department.

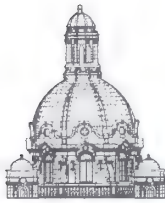
The Speaker has two distinct but related roles. In the Assembly the Speaker maintains order and ensures that MLAs conduct their business according to the Standing Orders of the Assembly. Administratively, the Speaker is responsible for the Assembly's records and for

providing services to MLAs and the public. The latter include financial administration, purchasing, human resources, office automation assistance, public education, and the library.

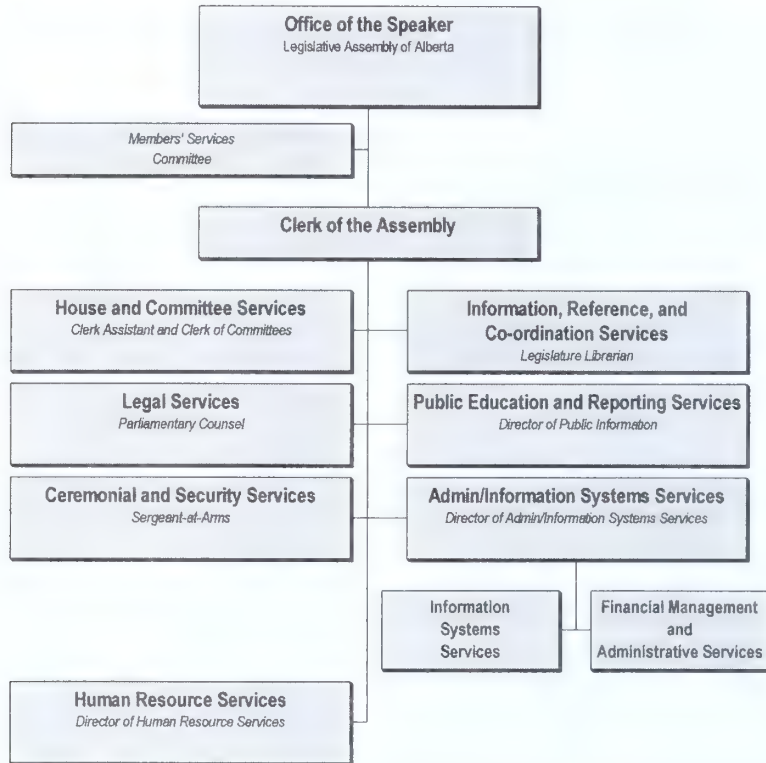
The Legislative Assembly Office as a whole has the same two procedural and administrative roles. This is a unique characteristic of the office and is evident throughout the office, particularly during session, when the normal duties, work hours, and office locations of many staff change significantly.

The office's annual budget as well as statutory provisions for financial and human resource administration are under the purview of a Special Standing Committee on Members' Services. A committee of the Assembly, the Members' Services Committee also regulates constituency office support and members' pay, allowances, benefits, and group insurance plans, all of which the office administers. Traditionally, the Speaker chairs the Members' Services Committee.

Each party grouping of elected members, or caucus, is a branch of the Legislative Assembly Office. Although technically the Speaker has authority over the administration of each caucus office, for obvious reasons these branches operate with considerable autonomy. The caucus branches are therefore not part of this report; it includes only branches of the office under the Speaker's full control. However, since the caucuses receive financial, administrative, and human resource services as well as other support from other branches of the office, the branches may refer to these services in their individual reports. In addition, the office's consolidated budget estimates, which appear at the end of this report, include the estimates for the caucus branches.



Organization, Purpose and Function



Purpose Statement

Within the traditions of parliamentary democracy as constitutionally established in Alberta, the Legislative Assembly will:

1. *Support the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly in carrying out the duties of office.*
2. *Support members in carrying out their roles as elected representatives of the people of Alberta.*
3. *Record the proceedings and maintain the records of the Legislative Assembly.*
4. *Inform and educate the public on behalf of members and the institution of parliament.*
5. *Support the Assembly in protecting its institutions and privileges.*
6. *Support the exchange of information and ideas among Legislatures.*
7. *Support the officers of the Legislature as required.*

Function Statements

Clerk of the Assembly

- Provides advice and support to the Speaker and members on procedural and administrative matters
- Manages the Legislative Assembly Office
- Acts as Secretary of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, Alberta branch

House and Committee Services

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees

- Provides procedural advice to the Speaker and members of the Assembly
- Manages support services to legislative committees
- Maintains Assembly records
- Manages production of Assembly documents

Parliamentary Counsel

- Provides legal services to the Speaker, members of the Assembly, and staff of the Legislative Assembly Office
- Drafts Assembly documents, including private members' bills and motions
- Provides legal services to the Chief Electoral Officer and Ethics Commissioner

Sergeant-at-Arms

- Provides security services to the Legislative Assembly
- Provides page and messenger services to the Assembly during its sittings

Information, Reference and Co-ordination Services

Legislature Librarian

- Provides information and reference services to the Legislative Assembly
- Co-ordinates a number of co-operative programs among Alberta government libraries

Public Education and Reporting Services

Director of Public Information

- Produces the official report of what is said during meetings of the Legislative Assembly and its committees
- Welcomes visitors and provides public education services for the Legislative Assembly
- Provides public information about the Legislative Assembly
- Prints and distributes Assembly publications

Human Resource Services

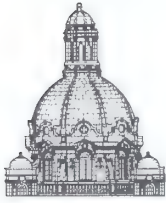
Director of Human Resource Services

- Provides human resource management services to the Legislative Assembly

Administrative/Information Systems Services

Director of Administrative/Information Systems Services

- Provides financial and administrative support to the Legislative Assembly
- Provides electronic data processing and office automation services to the Legislative Assembly
- Acts as co-ordinator for the administration of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act
- Provides records management services to the LAO



The Year in Review

W.J. David McNeil, Clerk of the Legislative Assembly

Interbranch Collaboration Enhances Service Excellence

In the first full calendar year of Speaker Kowalski's tenure, the Legislative Assembly Office met or exceeded its goals both in terms of ongoing, regular services and special projects and events. Every branch contributed significantly to this achievement by dedicated effort within the branch and working together with staff of other branches. Staff throughout the Assembly energetically supported numerous initiatives of the Speaker's office and other interbranch projects, developing closer working relationships with staff in other branches as they did so. Throughout the year, all staff contributed to maintaining the LAO's reputation among MLAs

and the public for prompt, friendly, professional service.

The most important change in the LAO in 1998 involved the relocation and renovation of virtually every work area in the department, which took place over the spring and summer. Thanks to the support of the Department of Public Works, Supply and Services, the LAO secured the southern half of the 10th floor of the Legislature Annex and additional space in the pedway, thereby enabling several branches with cramped quarters to gain much-needed additional office space. Public Works collaborated with LAO staff to determine the best configurations for offices and work areas and secured new

1998-99 Goals of the Legislative Assembly Office

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 Assist the Speaker in fulfilling the duties of office. | |
| 2 Meet and exceed the service expectations of Members.. | |
| 3 Assist Members in carrying out their roles as legislators within the parliamentary system in Alberta | |
| 4 Respond to increased demands for technology related services from Members, staff, and the public. | |
| 5 Increase public awareness of the Legislative Assembly within Alberta's democratic parliamentary system through information and outreach programs. | |
| 6 Continue to maintain the separation of powers among the Legislative Assembly, the Executive and the Judiciary. | |
| 7 Ensure that the Legislative Assembly Office provides quality services in an increasingly | |
| | competitive environment. |
| | 8 Provide leadership in fostering increasing interparliamentary co-operation through participation in national and international parliamentary forums and exchange programs. |
| | 9 Promote the products, services, and achievements of the Legislative Assembly Office to members, staff, and the public. |
| | 10 Foster and recognize leadership and teamwork within the Legislative Assembly Office. |
| | 11 Ensure the continuing development of the effectiveness and efficiency of the Legislative Assembly Office workforce. |
| | 12 Promote the involvement of employees in the ongoing development of the Legislative Assembly Office. |

ergonomic furniture for all support staff in order to provide a safer and more productive work environment. On December 2, Speaker Kowalski and the Hon. Stan Woloshyn, Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services, officially opened the newly renovated space as part of the LAO open house celebration.

The most significant staff change during the year was the retirement of Lorne Buhr as Legislature Librarian in May and the hiring of his successor Sandra Perry. In all, human resources coordinated 19 competitions for various positions involving most branches of the LAO.

The Assembly sat for 63 days in 1998, a substantial increase over the 41 days of 1997 but very near the average for the 1990s. This included 49 days (36 evenings) in the spring and 14 days (11 evenings) in the fall. During that time as well as throughout the year table officers and other staff provided professional support to the Speaker and the other members of the Assembly. Parliamentary Counsel drafted many private members' public bills; more were introduced in the 1998 spring sitting than in any year since the parliamentary reforms of 1993. *Hansard* continued to produce an accurate, reliable, and timely record for the Assembly and its committees. The Library continued to supply members with the broad range of authoritative information necessary for debate and decision-making. Committee staff ably assisted regular standing committees as well as the new special committee on Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act Review Committee and the committee to select a new Chief Electoral Officer.

An historic event occurred on opening day when the Alberta-Northwest Territories Command of the Royal Canadian Legion presented Speaker Kowalski with a new Black Rod. The special ceremony in the Rotunda marked the first time since 1919 that a Legislative Assembly in Canada has received a Black Rod. This project was spearheaded by the Sergeant-at-Arms but involved several other branches as well. Two managers collaborated to produce a feature article for the *Parliamentarian* magazine, which publicized the event and the Assembly's use of the Black Rod throughout the Commonwealth.

On Flag Day, February 12, the flags of all the provinces and territories were hung permanently on the south wall of the Chamber. Alberta thereby became the first jurisdiction in Canada to

hang all Canadian flags in its legislative Chamber.

LAO staff continued to build on their excellent reputation for helping host parliamentary visitors. In June, 15 Germans visited Alberta as part of the Partnership of Parliaments program, in which the Assembly was involved for the first time. Most of these visitors were elected members of state Legislatures in Germany. In November, a delegation of six officers and staff from the Mpumalanga, South Africa, Legislature came to Edmonton to learn from Alberta's experience in all areas of the Assembly's operation.

The key support areas of Human Resource Services, Financial Management and Administrative Services, and Information Systems Services continued to provide very high quality services to MLAs and other branches of the Assembly. Classification reviews, employment competitions, payroll and expense account processing, computer upgrades, and ongoing advice and support provided by these areas enabled everyone to do their work more efficiently.

March 31 marked the end of the second year of operation for the Legislative Assembly Management Information System (LAMIS), which has been successfully managed to handle the Assembly's financial information independently of Alberta Treasury. Accounting and administrative staff continued to process financial transactions promptly and accurately and to maintain and enhance the administrative infrastructure necessary for the Assembly to perform its work.

Major enhancements were made to the Assembly's Internet web site, the most noteworthy of which was the addition of legislative bills and amendments. This addition was tested on the internal network in the fall and readied for full implementation prior to the opening of the 1999 spring sittings. As well, work continued to ensure that all computer systems were year 2000 compliant.

The ergonomic committee, with representatives from all branches, continued its awareness and education program. Following the installation of ergonomic workstations throughout LAO offices in the summer, the committee held training sessions for staff, and information updates and brochures were distributed. This committee's awareness of the types of work being done in the various areas was of great benefit in tailoring the sessions and adjusting the equipment to suit individual needs.

Thanks to successful promotional activities and the creation of new educational programs and materials, visitor numbers increased substantially again in 1998. A major new initiative was opening the floor of the Chamber for Canada Day and having tour guides dress in ceremonial parliamentary robes. This open house event attracted over 6,000 visitors. Activities for visitors were expanded at Christmas as well with regular choir performances in the evenings as well as displays of gingerbread houses and sleighs in the pedway.

Toward the end of the year a pilot project was launched to set up museum school tours. This project, sponsored by the Alberta Museums Association, involved having four school groups establish a temporary classroom in the interpretive centre for a week while students, parents, and teachers met with staff and members all around the Legislature to learn more about how the place operates, from plumbing and gardening to passing laws and talking with constituents. Thanks to the co-operation and support of Public Works and security staff as well as LAO staff and members, the program went well, and plans were put in place to seek corporate sponsorship so that this might become a regular program at the Legislature.

The 11th Annual Speaker's Cup Golf Tournament took place September 3 at the Westlock Golf Club. For the first time LAO staff collaborated in a major way with the Speaker's office staff in co-ordinating this event. Financially, the tournament not only paid for itself but provided funds for two charities, the World Food Grains Bank and the Winnifred

Stewart school.

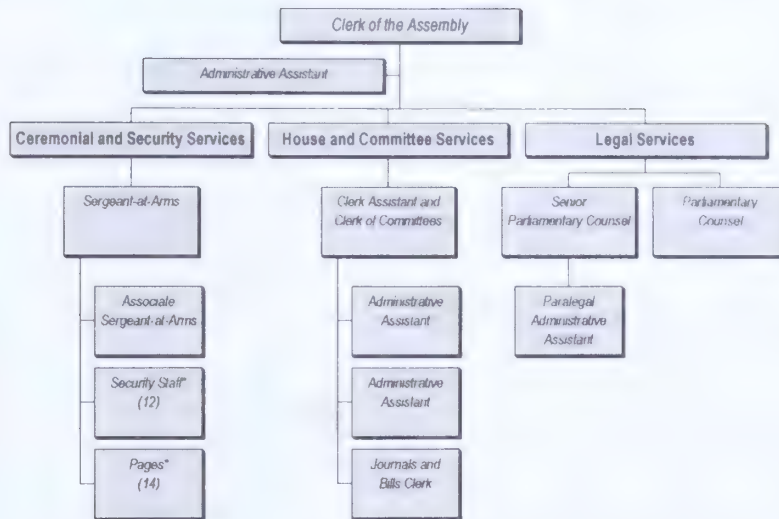
In the fall, many LAO staff from all branches contributed time, energy, and funds to the annual United Way campaign. Activities included participation in the wagon race, bagel sales, loonie draws, and a mountain bike draw. The campaign exceeded its goal, bringing in a total of \$10,450.

Planning was under way throughout the year for the first Mr. Speaker's Alberta Youth Parliament, scheduled to take place in April 1999. The steering committee, comprised of the Clerk, Sergeant-at-Arms, Director of Public Information, and Clerk's Administrative Assistant worked with six teacher advisors to develop a program that would be attractive and beneficial for the 83 students and 12 teachers who would participate. This program will involve one student MLA representing each constituency and will give them experience not only of debating and House strategy but of representing constituents. It was made possible thanks to the generous financial support of the Alberta-Northwest Territories Command of the Royal Canadian Legion.

On December 3 Speaker Kowalski hosted the second LAO staff appreciation dinner in the pedway. On that occasion, 15 staff received recognition for five, 10, 15, and 20 years of service, and all staff were thanked for their contributions to the many special projects that had occurred throughout the year and for their dedication and professionalism in providing excellent service to the Assembly every day. That evening's events were themselves co-ordinated by a committee of staff from various branches.



House Services



*indicates part-time or wage staff

House and Committee Services

Louise J. Kamuchik, Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees

In addition to providing procedural advice and support to Assembly members and staff both during and outside of session, House and Committee Services (HCS) adjusted procedures in accordance with amendments to the Assembly's Standing Orders, provided administrative assistance to five active standing committees and two select special committees, updated bill status reports on the Internet, helped with special ceremonies of the Assembly, hosted or assisted with visiting delegations and parliamentary association meetings, responded to questions concerning Assembly and committee procedures, and participated in professional conferences.

The Second Session of the 24th Legislature opened on Tuesday, January 27, with the Speech

from the Throne read by His Honour the Honourable Lieutenant Governor H.A. "Bud" Olson. That same day the Legislature was presented with a new Black Rod by the Royal Canadian Legion in a special ceremony. The Provincial Treasurer tabled the province's budget on February 12. The spring sitting of the Second Session was adjourned on April 29 but continued in the fall, opening November 16 and closing December 8.

Of the 32 private members' public bills introduced during the Second Session, four went on to receive Royal Assent. Since the 1993 changes to the Standing Orders a total of 16 private members' public bills have now received Royal Assent. With few exceptions, House activity increased over the previous year, as

shown on the attached comparative statistics chart.

On May 11, shortly after the spring sitting ended, Mr. Grant Mitchell, former Leader of the Official Opposition and MLA for Edmonton-McClung, resigned his seat after serving as an MLA since 1986. Mrs. Nancy MacBeth was elected as the new Liberal Party leader on April 18 and, after winning the June

17 by-election in Edmonton-McClung, was officially sworn in on July 16 by Speaker Kowalski.

Shortly after Mrs. MacBeth's swearing-in, Mr. Gene Zwozdesky, Liberal MLA for Edmonton-Mill Creek, announced he would sit as an independent member when the House next met. He subsequently joined the Progressive Conservative

<i>Comparative Statistics</i>		1998 Second Session 24th Legislature	1997 First Session 24th Legislature	1997 Fifth Session 23rd Legislature
Sitting Days (hours)	Spring	49 (177)	36 (124)	2 (4)
	Fall	14 (51)	3 (13)	0
Evening Sitzings (hours)	Spring	36 (76)	25 (56)	0
	Fall	11 (33)	2 (6)	0
Government Bills	Introduced	50	34	1
	Rec'd Royal Assent	44	29	0
Private Bills	Introduced	4	7	0
	Rec'd Royal Assent	4	7	0
Private Members' Public Bills	Introduced	32	19	20
	Rec'd Royal Assent	4	3	0
Government Motions	Debated	39	23	6
	Agreed to	38	22	5
	Withdrawn	(closure motion not moved) 1	0	0
Private Members' Motions	Placed on Order Paper	97	88	81
	Agreed to	10	4	0
	Defeated	6	3	0
	Withdrawn	1	2	0
Written Questions	Placed on Order Paper	57	29	(on notice) 5
	Accepted	43	16	0
	Rejected	11	0	0
	Withdrawn	0	0	0
Motions for Returns	Placed on Order Paper	50	55	(on notice) 2
	Accepted	23	18	0
	Rejected	21	7	0
	Withdrawn	0	0	0
Committee of Supply (days)	Main Estimates	20	20	0
	Lottery Fund	3	1	0
	Supplementary	5	2	0
Designated Supply Subcommittees (hours) (1998: Environmental Protection, Family and Social Services, Health, Justice and Attorney General, Municipal Affairs)		13.70	14.35	0
Tablings and Filings	Tablings Required by Statute	176	154	18
	Voluntary tablings	849	531	23
Petitions (excluding Private Bills)	Presented	120	114	8
	Read and received	80	58	0
Recognitions		139	not applicable	not applicable
Members' Statements		93	54	3
Ministerial Statements		22	12	0

Party. Party representation in the House at year's end stood at 64 Progressive Conservatives, 17 Liberals, and 2 New Democrats.

The branch administered both temporary and permanent amendments to the Assembly's Standing Orders, which were agreed to in early March. Highlights of these amendments include:

the provision for a private member to amend his or her motion standing on the Order Paper not less than four sitting days before the motion is moved subject to the Speaker's approval; the provision for tablings required by statute to be made outside of the ordinary hours of sitting; the introduction of a "Recognitions" item during the daily Routine on Mondays and Wednesdays where up to seven members other than members of Executive Council may make one-minute statements of congratulations or recognition which are not debatable; and beginning in 1999, the requirement that a notice portion be included on petitions to the Assembly in order that they may be read and received.

Throughout the year, HCS provided administrative and procedural support to standing and special select committees of the Assembly. Active standing committees in 1998 included the Standing Committee on Public Accounts (15 meetings), the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund (4 committee meetings and 4 public meetings), Legislative Offices (5 meetings), Private Bills (6 meetings), and the Special Standing Committee on Members' Services (2 meetings).

Five designated supply subcommittees, which review estimates of a particular department, were again established by the Committee of Supply along with four other subcommittees of supply that may review the estimates of several departments.

For the second year, the Standing Committee on the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund continued under its new mandate. This included reviewing and approving the business plan, receiving and reviewing quarterly reports on the operation of the fund, approving the annual report, and reviewing the fund's yearly performance. During the fall the committee held public meetings in Edmonton, Calgary, Fort McMurray, and Lethbridge on the fund's investment activities. The committee placed daily newspaper advertisements inviting individuals and groups to attend and sent additional invitations to various individuals, groups, and organizations.

In early March the Assembly created the Select

Special Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIPP) Act Review Committee. The eight-member all-party committee invited submissions from the public about FOIPP through extensive advertising in daily and weekly Alberta newspapers and a mail-out to groups and organizations. Following 14 meetings, which also included technical support from Alberta Labour staff, the ministry responsible for FOIPP, the committee's interim report with numerous recommendations reflecting the feedback of Albertans was released in late December. Copies were sent to all individuals and groups who made submissions to the committee, and the report was posted on the Assembly web site. The committee intends to table its final report during the spring sitting.

Gerrald Gwynn Scott Sutton was sworn in as Alberta's sixth Ombudsman on March 25, 1998, following the recommendation of the Select Special Ombudsman Search Committee and the approval of that recommendation by the Legislative Assembly in February.

The Assembly also established a Select Special Chief Electoral Officer Search Committee in early March. The committee, chaired by the Member for Lac La Biche-St. Paul, interviewed a number of qualified candidates and submitted their recommendation to the Assembly. Mr. O. Brian Fjeldheim, the Deputy Chief Electoral Officer at Elections Alberta for several years, became Alberta's fourth Chief Electoral Officer on November 17 when the Assembly approved the committee's recommendation.

The bill status report, previously a WordPerfect summary loaded daily during session onto the Assembly's home page, was replaced in the fall with a Microsoft Access database loaded onto the internal Intranet site to allow users to search for and link to full text documents. This new searchable database for bills and amendments was scheduled to be available on the Assembly's external home page beginning with the spring 1999 session. Only those bills introduced and amendments passed during the current session will be available. Users will now be able to print and track the data for government bills, private members' public bills, private bills, and successful amendments as they are posted.

From June 7 to 11 Speaker Kowalski hosted a group of German state parliamentarians as part of

the parliamentary exchange Partnership of Parliaments program. The delegation met with the Premier, the Minister of Environmental Protection, and the chair of the standing policy committee on economy and jobs, many members of the Assembly, as well as officials from the cities of Edmonton and Calgary, the University of Alberta hospital, and representatives from the energy, forestry, and medical research and technology sectors.

At the Clerks-at-the-Table Professional Development Seminar in August, the Clerk presented a paper entitled Private Members' Business: Can the Private Member Make a Difference? This paper also formed the backdrop for a discussion of the same topic at the CPA Regional Seminar in November.

The branch continued its practice of co-operating with other jurisdictions by responding to many surveys and questionnaires on Assembly and committee procedures. The Clerk Assistant continued to provide administrative support to the

Alberta section of the America region of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie (APF) and the Association of Clerks-at-the-Table's Education Committee.

As part of the ongoing responsibilities associated with their positions, branch staff attended the Canadian Council of Public Accounts Committees conference, the Council on Governmental Ethics Laws Conference, and the Canadian Ombudsman Conference.

HCS also assisted with and participated in events organized by the Assembly and the Canadian Parliamentary Association (CPA): the Black Rod presentation ceremony, the spring meeting of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie, the 21st Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Canadian Regional Seminar, and meetings with the Mpumalanga Legislature.

Robert Reynolds, Senior Parliamentary Counsel
Shannon Dean, Parliamentary Counsel

Counsel continued to serve as table officers during session and to provide legal and procedural advice to the Speaker, the Deputy Speaker, the Deputy Chairman of Committees, the committees of the Assembly, members, the Legislative Assembly Office, and the office of the Chief Electoral Officer.

During the spring sitting 46 government bills and 32 private members' bills were introduced, the greatest number of private members' bills to be introduced in the spring sitting since the parliamentary reforms of 1993. Prior to reforms such bills had virtually no chance of becoming law and therefore the drafting process was less demanding. By the end of the spring sitting 35 government bills, three private members' public bills, and four private bills received Royal Assent. The three private members' public bills that received Royal Assent were Bill 206, Human Tissue Donation Procedures Statutes Amendment Act, 1998; Bill 212, Amusements Amendment Act, 1998; and Bill 213, School (Computer Instruction) Amendment Act, 1998. During the sitting the office was busy providing advice on a number of interesting procedural matters, including amendments to the Standing Orders.

Although it spanned only four weeks, a number of procedural issues arose during the fall sitting. On the first day, Speaker Kowalski made a statement regarding the role of the Chair in presiding over question period and the *sub judice* convention. The following day he ruled on a question of privilege stemming from comments made during question period on the last day of the spring sitting. In the last days of the session the motion for the previous question was moved. This was the first time this procedural tactic had been used in several years.

Nine government bills and one private member's bill, the Highway Traffic Amendment Act, 1998, were passed by the Assembly and received Royal Assent during the fall sitting.

Parliamentary Counsel provided support to the Private Bills Committee by working with petitioners for private bills, co-ordinating the process for bringing these bills to the committee, and providing legal advice. In 1998 the committee studied four private bills, all of which were recommended to the Assembly.

Together with the Clerk both counsel participated in presenting a procedural orientation to the Public Affairs Bureau in June. In August both counsel presented a paper at the annual conference of the Association of Canadian Election Officials titled "Disqualification of Members, the Charter and Privilege: Implications of the Supreme Court of Canada's Decision in *Harvey versus New Brunswick* (Attorney General). In September both counsel attended the annual meeting of the Association of Parliamentary Counsel (APC) in Canada held in Whitehorse, where Rob Reynolds presented the paper *Parliamentary Privilege and the Courts: The Limits of Respect*. Rob was also elected APC secretary.

The office had additional assistance during the latter part of 1998 from a Quebec exchange student who was hired to work on research projects related to parliamentary law and procedure. She also helped the Clerk Assistant with various tasks related to the Assembly's participation in the spring meeting of the *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie* (APF).

Finally, Parliamentary Counsel continued to advise both the public and the legal profession on matters concerning parliamentary law and the procedures of the Legislative Assembly.

Ceremonial and Security Services

Brian Hodgson, Sergeant-at-Arms

Ceremonial and Security Services (CSS) continued to respond to security concerns, ensure the safety of members, visitors, and staff in the Chamber, precincts, and constituency offices, secure the Chamber and staff areas of the Assembly, make technical improvements to the security system, oversee the page program, and plan ceremonial events. In addition, the branch provided increased communications support to the Speaker's office.

Branch staff responded to numerous security issues and concerns raised by individual MLAs and the staff at several constituency offices. While some of these issues were extremely serious, most related to threatening letters, abusive telephone calls, or dangerous visitors to constituency offices. There was one break-in at a constituency office; another office had an attempted break-in, but the security alarm prevented any theft from occurring. The value of the stolen property was down substantially from previous years. Security briefing visits to constituency offices were down from 1997, which was an election year. Seven new security alarm systems were installed this year.

During the fall and spring sittings the branch assisted approximately 12,300 visitors to the galleries and provided security for 63 sitting days, 47 evening sittings, and 32 committee meetings for members and staff. CSS also provided security for five youth parliaments held in the Chamber. These were the Rt. Hon. Sir Winston Leonard Spencer Churchill Society of Edmonton, Alberta Debate and Speech Association, the Forum for Young Albertans, the Parlement Jeunesse de l'Alberta, and the University of Alberta Model Parliament. Branch staff also co-ordinated arrangements for these groups to use other areas of the Legislature Building.

The Sergeant-at-Arms helped interview 20 prospective pages. Branch staff also co-ordinated the page development program, including a speech competition sponsored by TransAlta. Tim Jolly was the winner of this year's competition.

CSS also assisted with nine civil service orientation tours, met with six school groups, made presentations to two classes at Weinlos elementary school, and conducted numerous tours of the Chamber at the request of individual members. Along with the Director of Public Information, the Sergeant-at-Arms made a presentation to the Social Studies Council of the Alberta Teachers' Association.

The branch implemented the terms of reference for the Security Co-ordination Committee. This committee consists of staff from the Department of Justice protection services, Legislative Assembly security, and Public Works, Supply and Services: the three agencies that secure the Legislature Building, Grounds, pedway, and Annex.

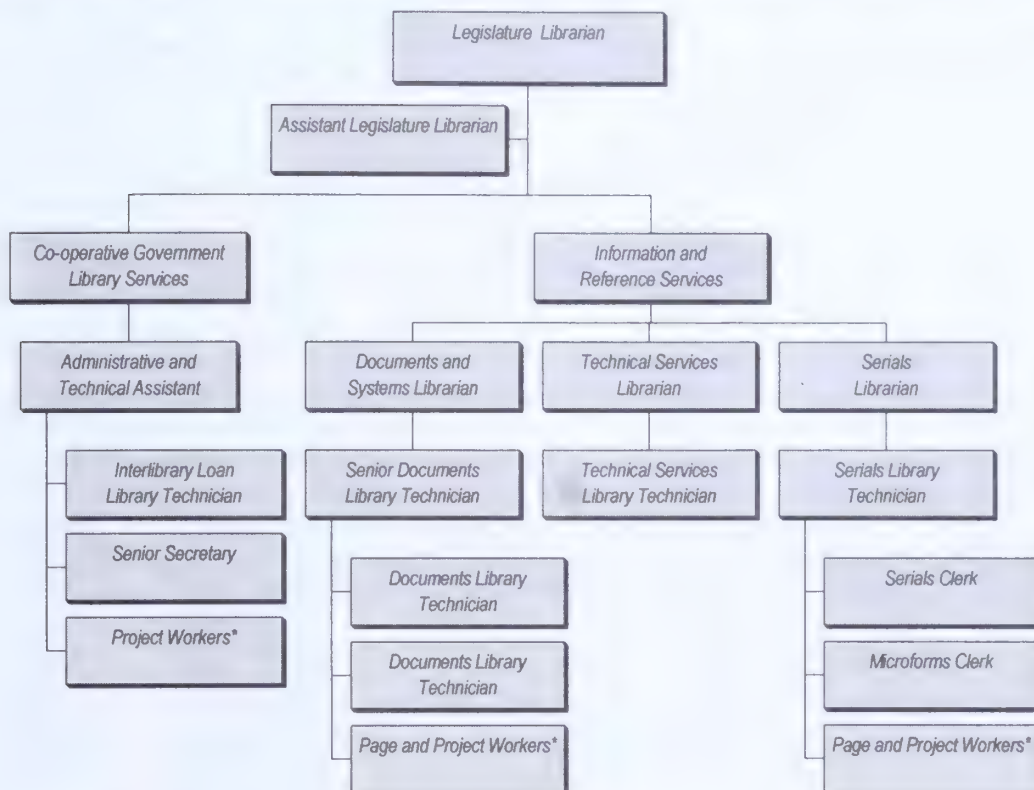
In August the Sergeant-at-Arms attended the 17th annual Canadian Association of Sergeants-at-Arms conference in Yellowknife, N.W.T., and presented a paper called Partnerships in Promoting Parliamentary Institutions. This year the Sergeant-at-Arms will also produce and edit the association's newsletter.

Finally, the branch spearheaded or supported several interbranch events and programs including Mr. Speaker's Alberta Youth Model Parliament, the Black Rod ceremony, the South Alberta Regimental Association brass plaque ceremony, a poppy presentation ceremony by the Alberta-Northwest Territories Command of the Royal Canadian Legion, the 1998 Remembrance Day service, the Legislative Assembly brand, the Partnership of Parliaments, and the CPA seminar.



Information, Reference, and Co-ordination Services: Legislature Library

Sandra E. Perry, Legislature Librarian



*indicates part-time or wage staff

The most significant change for the Library in 1998 was the retirement of Legislature Librarian Lorne Buhr, who left in May following 21 years of service. Assistant Legislature Librarian Karen Powell served as acting head until the appointment of Sandra Perry as the new Librarian on September 1. Ms Perry came to the Legislature from Alberta Justice, where she had been manager of the Provincial Court Libraries for five years. The library's staff complement remained unchanged with 14 full-time permanent employees and three part-time wage positions.

Overall goals for the year included enhancing

access to the library's print collection, improving service to clients via electronic media, broadening the scope of current awareness services, and continuing to preserve the unique collection of Alberta community newspapers. Other initiatives included supplementing the library's book and serials collection to provide more comprehensive coverage of timely topics before the Legislature, surveying client satisfaction with selected library services, participating in co-operative ventures within the Legislative Assembly Office and the Alberta Government Libraries' Council, and partnering with other library and information colleagues whenever appropriate.

This year the records for the Library's periodical collection were added to the on-line catalogue, enabling patrons to determine the most recent issue of a particular periodical received in the Library. With the assistance of summer students, the first ever automated inventory of the book collection was undertaken.

With a small increase in funding for collection development the Library was able to update some of its reference material and begin several new periodical subscriptions. Staff continued to alert Library patrons to the latest acquisitions and authoritative web sites with frequent issues of its current awareness publications: *New Books in the Library*, *Selected Periodical Articles in the Library*, and *WebWatch*. A new publication, *Notes from the Library*, describes specific services and products offered by the Library. The Library was pleased to extend distribution of these titles electronically to all constituency offices.

To provide increased access to electronic service for the end user, the Library began subscribing to the following new electronic services: NewsCan, Dow Jones Interactive, CARL Uncover, and Quicklaw. These services allow on-line access to a multitude of

communities. Priority is given to newspapers published prior to 1950. The papers being prepared for microfilming during the '98-99 fiscal year include those from the communities of Czar, Innisfree, Killam, Onoway, Millet, Rosalind, and Strome. Newspaper preservation developments in other jurisdictions are monitored, particularly those involved in assessing the costs and benefits of scanning and digitization. As well, the Library participated in a Canadian Institute for Historical MicroReproductions survey and submitted a microfilming report for inclusion in the publication *National Library News*.

The Library's Co-operative Government Library Services section (CGLS) continued to publish the *Alberta Government Libraries' Newsletter* and the *Directory of Alberta Government Libraries & Resource Centres* and distributed survey questionnaires to subscribers to obtain input regarding future directions. CGLS staff continued to maintain the *Union List of Serials in Alberta Government & College Libraries* and issued a substantially revised edition of the *Union List Coding Manual* for participants. They also continued to update historical files on Members of the Legislative Assembly, Alberta deputy

Comparative Statistics	1998	1997
Information and Reference Services		
Total number of volumes (by conventional count)	287,815	277,366
Circulation items borrowed for use outside the Library	6,385	6,824
Current Awareness Electronic Circulation	5,200	—
Number of reference requests requiring less than 15 minutes to complete	7,470	6,678
Number of reference requests requiring 15 minutes to one hour to complete	817	846
Number of reference requests requiring more than one hour to complete	48	51
Number of online searches	219	133
Number of times our on-line catalogue was accessed through the Internet	4,821	2,215
Co-operative Government Library Services		
Titles in Union List of Serials from Alberta government libraries	11,834	12,375
Number of interlibrary requests by Alberta government libraries	2,076	2,707
Number of requests by Alberta government libraries for professional advice	78	59

periodicals, newspapers, and legal/legislative materials. Providing clients with online access to the Library's catalogue sped up the process of identifying local resources, as evidenced in the 117 percent increase in visits to the catalogue on the Internet site.

In 1976 the Library commenced microfilming parts of its unique Alberta weekly newspaper collection, some of which goes back to 1905. To date, newspapers have been microfilmed for 92

ministers, and government departments since 1905. As well, a bibliography of books and journal articles written by and about Alberta MLAs was completed for the time period 1905-93. CGLS staff continued to be responsible for maintaining the government's periodical storage facility and providing document delivery service for government libraries from the University of Alberta.

The summer of 1998 turned out to be a period of

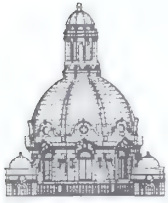
transition both in terms of personnel and facilities. In mid-July the staff of the CGLS section moved to the eighth floor of the Legislature Annex. Two students were employed in July and August to assist with special projects, including the transfer of the library's historical videotape collection from the Terrace building to the Annex. They were also available to help staff respond quickly and efficiently to repeated flooding in several of the Library's storage areas. Fortunately, damage to the Library's stored collection was minimal, but these incidents underscored the need to obtain more suitable storage space for housing weekly newspapers and government documents.

Library staff enjoyed opportunities to meet and exchange information with visiting delegations, to assist with hosting of special events, and participate in LAO interbranch initiatives. These included hosting the Mpumalanga, South Africa, delegation; the meeting of the American Region of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie; the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Canadian Regional Seminar; the LAO ergonomics committee; United Way; *Under the Dome*; and the staff awards and recognition ceremony committee.

In addition, the Legislature Librarian served as chair of the Alberta Government Libraries' Council

and the assistant Legislature Librarian served as ex-officio member and chair of the council's performance measures committee. The latter also participated in the work of the Alberta directory of records project advisory group.

Several staff members attended the Alberta Association of Library Technicians Conference. The technical services librarian and the documents/systems librarian represented the Library at the Association of Parliamentary Librarians in Canada conference in Yellowknife. The documents/systems librarian was also able to spend a few days at the B.C. Legislative Library studying their Dynix acquisitions module and Internet applications, all of which is expected to benefit the Library in 1999.



Public Education and Reporting Services: Public Information Branch

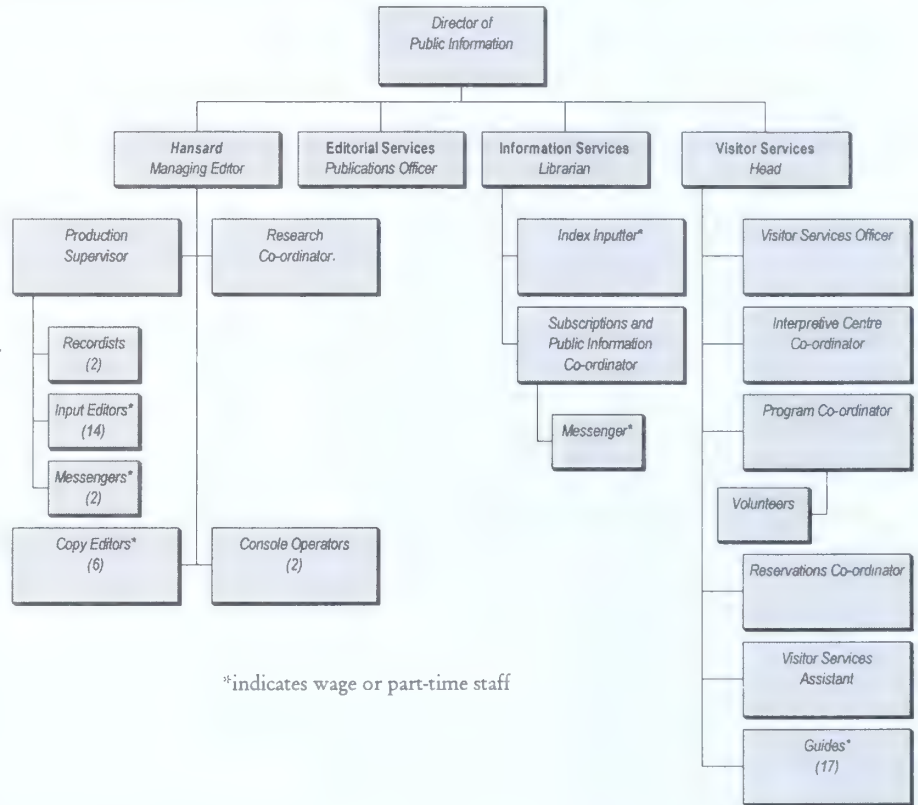
Gary Garrison, Director

In 1998 Visitor Services expanded their educational and outreach activities, resulting in significant increases in school bookings and overall visitor numbers. *Hansard* staff maintained their longstanding reputation for timeliness and accuracy, despite editorial staff turnover. Editorial and information services staff continued to provide high-quality information and publications services. Other highlights of the year included adjusting to new WordPerfect software for the production of *Hansard*, hiring a new full-time staff member, a classification review of full-time Visitor Services

positions, major initiatives in public education and program materials for school groups, and increased and improved special events and exhibits.

Hansard staff continued to produce a highly reliable, accurate, and timely record of Assembly and committee proceedings despite a shortage of senior sessional editors and a high turnover of sessional input editors. The sessional workload returned to more normal levels with 63 sitting days this year, up from 41 days in 1997. The demand for committee transcripts was up significantly as well partly due to the new Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Review Committee.

Eight new input editors were hired in January,



but by the end of the year it was clear that at least eight more would be needed early in 1999.

Interviews and testing were done prior to the fall sittings in November, and nine new input editors were selected to start training in the new year. In May the branch hired a full-time publications officer partly to provide additional editorial support for *Hansard*.

Following installation of WordPerfect 8, the full-time staff dedicated considerable effort and creativity to upgrade *Hansard* and develop new methods for producing transcripts that would make the most effective use of the new software's features. Thanks to the expertise of the full-time staff, problems

encountered along the way were dealt with on the fly and were invisible to transcript users.

Information staff continued to create an accurate and complete *Hansard* index. With the support of ISS work proceeded on new indexing software so that it would be ready to use by opening day in 1999. Although they received approximately the same volume of information requests as in the previous year, the number of requests for information unrelated to the Legislative Assembly was significantly higher than before. This was probably because more people are using the Internet to do research and because it's easier to make multiple requests for information by electronic mail than it is to make numerous telephone calls.

The demand for subscriptions and congratulatory scrolls continued to be steady, and progress was made towards implementing new subscription software to help manage the records and print labels.

The branch enhanced its publications in 1998 as the hiring of a new publications officer helped improve the quality of flyers, advertisements, newsletters, and other printed materials and provided additional writing and publications expertise to other parts of the LAO. PIB's contribution to the worldwide web included a new virtual tour of the Legislature Building and an educational game. These resulted from close collaboration between Visitor Services staff and the Department of Education and were featured in the fall during Education Week. Increased school bookings and promotional activities led to greater demand for copies of *The Citizen's Guide*. A third edition of the guide was produced in the fall incorporating updates to material originally printed in 1994.

The branch worked with LAO managers to produce the Assembly's annual report. Staff created the first annual report of the Alberta branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, which was published together with the LAO report and tabled in the Assembly in February. For the 11th year, the branch also produced the staff newsletter, *Under the Dome*, which continues to be well regarded and well received by the staff.

Branch staff continued to play key roles in the *Hansard* Association of Canada and the Association of Legislative Visitor Services. Alberta continued to be among the leaders in both areas. The director was re-elected secretary-treasurer of the *Hansard*

Association and at the end of the year traveled to Iqaluit to assist in the creation of a *Hansard* for the new Nunavut Territory. The head of Visitor Services was invited to sit on the Canadian Capital Cities Organization committee to represent the Legislature and to help enhance co-operation among capital cities, especially with respect to Canada Day activities.

When office space renovation plans were in the final stages, the branch's administrative functions were re-examined. This led to some restructuring. The branch's administrative assistant became the assistant to the head of Visitor Services, and when Visitor Services' space was expanded and renovated in the pedway in March, the branch's administrative duties were adjusted, with most of them reassigned to staff in the information section. The sale of MLA promotional items also shifted from information to the gift shop.

Many new projects have been undertaken since the appointment of a new head of Visitor Services in October 1996. The Mock Legislature program, which kicked off in November 1997, proved to be very popular with teachers, students, and MLAs in 1998. The Preserve Our World (POW) environmental program for grade 4 has also attracted strong interest. Full-time and part-time staff proved their resourcefulness by reacting creatively to the wide variances in groups' preparedness and managed to improve the overall effectiveness and appeal of both programs as the year proceeded.

The total number of school group bookings in 1998 was up 26 percent from 1997 partly because of increased interest in the new programs and partly because of increased advertising and promotion. These efforts included a mail-out to Edmonton area grade 6 teachers in September, followed by a general mail-out to all elementary schools in the province. The centrepiece of the mail-out was the new full-colour educational poster created thanks to the collaboration of many Visitor Services staff and some initial assistance from Alberta Environmental Protection. The colour illustration on the front of the poster outlines Alberta's geographical shape and features a variety of activities such as oil drilling, agriculture, construction, skiing, fishing, children playing, et cetera. Ten MLAs are shown in various situations, and one of the educational activities on the back of the poster asks students to talk about the role of the MLA in each case and to role-play

conversations with constituents. In all, the back of the poster includes nine activity and information panels, with duplicating masters for teachers.

In the spring the branch produced a new activity book designed for younger grades, specifically kindergarten to grade 4. This, too, resulted from the collaboration of a number of Visitor Services staff.

Both the activity book and the poster were well received by MLAs, teachers, students, and the public.

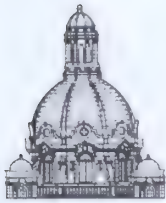
The director collaborated with the Clerk and the Sergeant-at-Arms to develop plans for the first Mr. Speaker's Alberta Youth Parliament. Sponsored by the Alberta-Northwest Territories Command of the Royal Canadian Legion, this new program, to be held in April 1999, will involve 83 grade 10 students, one from each constituency, and 12 grade 10 social studies teachers.

Promotional posters, pamphlets, and applications were sent to every Alberta high school early in December.

The Public Information Branch organized or provided support for several interbranch events and ongoing programs including opening day ceremonies, the Black Rod presentation, the Klondike Days breakfast on the grounds, Canada Day at the Legislature, the Speaker's Cup Golf Tournament, the CPA Regional Seminar, the Mpumalanga,

South Africa delegation, the Partnership of Parliaments visit, the museum school tour program pilot project, the Christmas light-up, Celebrate the Season Christmas, office renovations and relocations, and the ergonomics committee.

Comparative Statistics	1998	1997
Visitors to Legislature and Interpretive Centre		
Visitors on tour	46,449	43,404
Special events	21,612	11,749
Casual	35,157	40,117
Total	103,218	95,270
Tours and Programs		
Regular tours	2,959	2,840
VIP tours	13	21
Educational programs	426	337
Civil service orientation	7	11
Gift shop sales	\$ 88,960	\$ 69,803
MLA promotional items	\$139,740	\$130,666
Gallery seats reserved	12,277	6,967
Volunteer hours	680.5	626
Public Information and Subscriptions		
Public information calls	6,963	8,589
Congratulatory scrolls	2,403	2,330
Paid subscriptions		
Daily <i>Hansard</i>	304	307
<i>Hansard</i> bound volumes	34	46
Bills, Votes	282	296
<i>Journals</i>	282	296
Complimentary issues		
Daily <i>Hansard</i>	351	347
<i>Hansard</i> bound volumes	90	100
Bills, Votes	511	506
Order Paper	327	316
<i>Hansard</i> index and on-line inquiries	81	96
Web site inquiries	109	
Assembly Statistics		
<i>Hansard</i> pages	2,428	1,454
Subcommittees of Supply		
Meetings reported	17	17
Meeting hours	37	39
Transcript pages	262	270
Committee meetings reported	52	41
Committee meeting hours	90	71
Committee transcript pages	686	546
Total <i>Hansard</i> and committee pages	3,376	2,270



Administrative/Information Systems Services: Information Systems Services

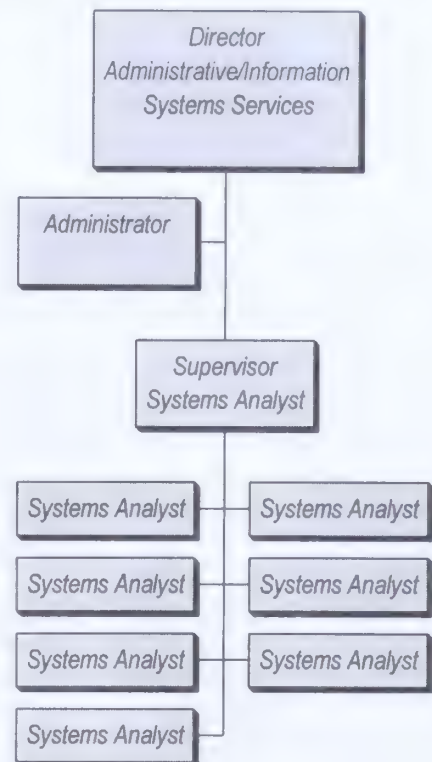
Bill Gano, Director

The biggest project of 1998 was to upgrade computer systems so the Assembly would be Y2K compliant. Other highlights included web site enhancement, software upgrading, network connections for MLAs' desks in the Chamber, new cheques and direct deposit statements, and attending to freedom of information requests on behalf of the LAO. Of course, considerable effort was devoted to maintaining the Assembly's computer network and providing ongoing user support.

In order to ensure that all LAO computers and programs were Y2K compliant, staff reviewed every piece of software and hardware owned by the Assembly and upgraded systems in most cases to a Windows 95 platform, 32-bit applications, and new Pentium class CPUs. As of year's end 77 of 83 constituency offices and 190 of 200 networked workstations at the Legislature had been upgraded to meet Y2K requirements. The remaining systems are slated for upgrading at the start of the 1999-2000 fiscal year. ISS also made plans to change the phone numbers preprogrammed into computers when northern Alberta's new area code came into effect in January 1999.

Other work in 1998 included upgrading the electronic mail system for all Legislature offices and planning to upgrade e-mail for constituency offices during the first six months of 1999. As well, the branch continued to establish Internet and e-mail connections for MLAs using laptops in the Chamber. By the end of 1998 35 members had these connections.

A number of changes were made to the Assembly's internal and external web sites. Both sites now have a more standardized look from page to page, but the most significant project was the introduction of bills and amendments online. A searchable database tested internally and recently posted on the external web site gives anyone with Internet access the ability to quickly



review current bills and approved amendments and download or print the text in WordPerfect format. The database is updated within 24 hours of a change. The Assembly also continued to maintain web pages for the Auditor General, Chief Electoral Officer, and the Ombudsman.

Another web project begun in 1998 will make time sheets and expense claims available on the internal web site. Members and staff will have the option of completing and submitting their forms electronically.

The Legislative Assembly Information System continued to provide keyword search facilities for *Hansard*, Alberta Statutes, bill status reports, tablings, government motions, private members' motions, written questions, motions for returns, committees, commissions, the RITE directory, and Canadian phone books as well as searches for

government program information (SPERG).

The branch continued to test, install, maintain, and upgrade in-house information management systems such as accounts payable, payroll, inventory, and point of sale; to purchase, install, move, and maintain computer terminals and peripherals; to provide training and advice to users; to maintain network servers and local and remote workstations; to establish budgetary priorities; to meet the electronic database processing needs of all constituency offices; to facilitate regular electronic data processing management committee meetings; and to conduct word processing, spreadsheet, e-mail, database, and financial systems training sessions.

A system implemented to track calls to the ISS help line and manage inventory has logged more than 2,800 calls since it was installed in June 1997. ISS staff enter most calls in the system and try to keep response time to a minimum.

Plans were also made to hold a joint seminar with Human Resources Services and Financial Management and Administrative Services for all constituency office staff to help them become better acquainted with the range of services provided and the best way of

accessing them.

One very visible change that occurred this year was the introduction of new cheques and direct deposit statements. These cheques and statements, unique to the Assembly, were made possible through the creation of an independent Legislative Assembly bank account. As well, steps were taken toward producing separate Legislative Assembly financial statements.

Freedom of information and protection of privacy (FOIPP) activity continued, one noteworthy issue being a request for access to former members' benefit records.

ISS provided technical support to interbranch activities including the Speaker's Cup and the CPA seminar.

<i>Comparative Statistics</i>	1998	1997
Equipment in place		
Constituency workstations	108	109
Constituency printers	101	101
LAN workstations	154	163
LAN laser printers	56	56
Dedicated library workstations	18	18
Servers	20	21
Scanners	3	3
Notebook computers	78	61
Equipment replaced		
Obsolete workstations	63	65
Obsolete laser printers	30	17
Obsolete laptop computers	2	8
Training		
Person-days of training	164	175



Administrative/Information Systems Services: Financial Management and Administrative Services

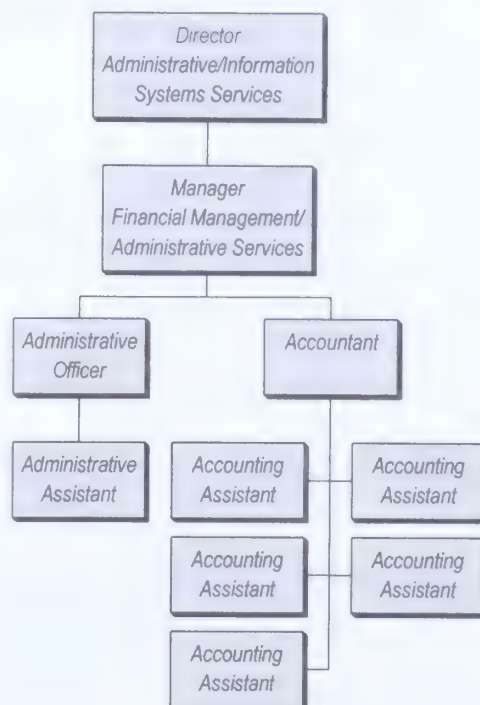
Jacqueline Breault, Manager

The branch continued to provide fiscal support, advice, and administration including financial reconciliation and reporting, control of a new bank account for the Assembly, managing leases, and purchasing equipment and supplies.

Financial Management and Administrative Services (FMAS) staff are responsible for all accounts payable, revenues/accounts receivable, inventory, and general ledger functions for the Legislative Assembly Office. Until September FMAS was also responsible for the accounts payable and general ledger functions for the office of the Ethics Commissioner and Information and Privacy Commissioner.

The branch entered budget information for fiscal 1998-99 into the Legislative Assembly Management Information System (LAMIS) early in the year, provided Alberta Treasury with budget information for the production of LAO estimates and the consolidation with government budget figures, processed internal budget adjustments associated with a member's change in standing in the summer and decisions made by the Members' Services Committee in October, completed initial budget preparations for 1999-2000, and along with ISS staff reviewed and redesigned budget spreadsheets for 1999-2000.

Staff spent considerable time working on the reconciliation project and ensuring that fiscal year-end went smoothly. The branch completed a full reconciliation of the balance sheet financial information to March 31, 1998, completed the fiscal year-end (including year-end accruals) in June, and produced quarterly budget and expenditure forecasts for Alberta Treasury. Staff from Deloitte & Touche and ISS assisted with periodic updates to the LAMIS system. Due to the increased responsibility of having an independent financial system and LAO bank



account, the branch focused more attention on completing ongoing as opposed to periodic financial and bank account statement reconciliations.

FMAS continued to track and report on LAO expenses. The accountant and branch manager drafted an initial MLA travel/gasoline analysis for the Clerk following a suggestion in the 1997 Auditor General's report. Staff completed annual MLA expense and allowance reports for fiscal 1996-97 and 1997-98 and budget tracking and forecast reports for the Clerk. Implementation of direct deposit for MLA expense and allowance claims was completed early this year; the phase-in for employee expense claims and payments to major vendors will be done in 1999. Ministerial and government committee remuneration processed through the payroll system was charged

back to departments, and a spreadsheet program was developed to speed up the process. On behalf of all branches of the LAO the branch also procured foreign exchange to cover authorized foreign travel or purchase.

The administrative staff of FMAS provided patient, friendly, and informative services to our clientele and assisted the Manager in ensuring that all administrative activities were accomplished in a timely, comprehensive manner. The branch maintained leases on approximately 90 locations, made arrangements for moving office furniture, equipment, and furnishings, and addressed insurance issues and maintenance concerns.

Branch staff provided a range of telecommunications service, troubleshooting, and advice to members and LAO staff. FMAS completed six upgrades to the Centrex system and two upgrades to alternate systems, liaised with Public Works telecommunications staff, and kept up with industry technology and regulatory changes including the abolition of C400 mobile service in the upcoming year. Also in 1998 staff enhanced the process for submissions of MLA directory advertising with Telus Advertising Ltd., provided assistance in the review and development of a new RITE directory format in co-operation with a representative of the Public Affairs Bureau, and continued to administer the calling card and credit card programs. Staff helped the Director of Administrative/Information Systems Services determine the impact of Y2K on constituency and LAO operations. Staff increasingly used

electronic commerce tools in administration duties.

The branch continued to upgrade photocopiers and faxes where necessary in LAO and constituency offices, provided more than 200 stationery and office supply items, administered the Legislature lounge supplies program during the spring and fall sittings of the Legislature, and continued to liaise with private-sector vendors.

Several staff changes occurred in March and September this year. A new accounting assistant to fill a vacancy. A part-time tour guide from PIB was hired as an accounting assistant to provide maternity leave in mid-March. The administrative assistant position was vacated and then filled in mid-September. A part-time employee in the spring worked full-time in the summer under STEP (summer temporary employment program) and left in the fall.

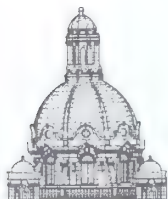
FMAS provided support for conferences, orientations, and other meetings. In addition, branch staff were involved in several LAO initiatives; for example, membership on the EDP Management Committee, representation on *Under the Dome's* editorial board, representation on the LAO's Ergonomic Committee, participation in the Speaker's Cup Golf Tournament, and participation in United Way, including co-chairing the committee.

Comparative Statistics	1998	1997
Invoices coded and data entered (ledger 19A)	21,416	19,776
Invoices coded and data entered (ledger 19E)*	195	232
Invoices coded and data entered (ledger 19F)*	514	298
Constituency offices, moved	4	28
Constituency offices, new	0	5
Constituency offices, closed	2	1
Telecommunications services installed or moved	11	48
Mail processed	13,107	14,144
Direct purchase orders issued	159	187
MLA purchase orders processed	5,125	6,000
Other requests processed	2,450	2,880
Special requests processed	221	260
Revenues:		
Hansard	\$ 30,914.39	\$ 1,382.23
Sessional	\$ 20,333.12	\$ 7,843.12
Private Bills	\$ 2,200.00	\$ 1,400.00
Gift Shop	\$ 88,960.00	\$ 126,225.60
Library	\$ 25,656.41	\$ 7,714.22
Other	\$ 4,371.00	\$ 5,061.37
TOTAL	\$172,434.92	\$159,626.54

*Note: The Offices of the Ethics Commissioner and Information and Privacy Commissioner began processing their own accounts payable effective October 1, 1998.

Summary of Budget Estimates by Account

	Description	1998-99	1997-98
	Human Resource Expenses		
	Earnings - Management	\$ 788,976	\$ 675,292
	Earnings - Nonmanagement	4,797,015	4,520,659
	Employer Contributions	901,593	846,704
	Allowances & Supplementary Benefits	115,178	101,815
Subtotal		\$6,602,762	\$6,144,470
	Operational Expenses		
	Travel	\$1,462,417	\$1,425,169
	Advertising	159,700	132,550
	Insurance	50,000	24,268
	Postage & Freight	174,237	193,256
	Office Equipment Rental/Purchase	380,014	373,468
	Telecommunications	467,697	434,701
	Equipment Repairs & Maintenance	56,191	56,011
	Other Labour & Services	519,435	584,930
	Data Processing Services	319,632	298,632
	Hosting	58,258	72,617
	Other Administration/Supplies	530,644	510,220
	Rentals	1,400	
Subtotal		\$4,179,625	\$4,105,822
	Grants		
	General	\$2,560	\$2,560
Subtotal		\$2,560	\$2,560
	Payments to MLAs		
		\$6,437,652	\$7,590,972
Subtotal		\$6,437,652	\$7,590,972
	Members' Services Allowances		
	Constituency Office Allowances	\$3,378,266	\$3,275,346
	Communication Allowances	1,080,675	973,914
	Promotion Allowances	304,679	293,536
Subtotal		\$4,763,620	\$4,542,796
	Revenue		
	Fees & Permits	\$ 1,200	\$ 1,200
	Other Revenue	132,360	130,438
Subtotal		(\$133,560)	(\$131,638)
Net Total		\$21,852,659	\$22,254,982



Human Resource Services

Cheryl Scarlett, Director

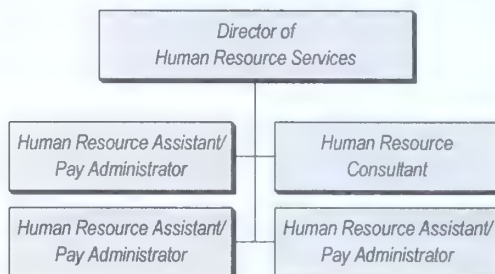
Highlights for Human Resource Services (HRS) this year included enhancing the in-house payroll system, managing salary adjustments, conducting 145 interviews, completing a major classification review, providing ergonomics training, overseeing LAO office moves, and developing a new career section on the Assembly's Internet web site.

The branch was involved in ongoing maintenance and enhancement of our in-house payroll system. This included third-party reconciliations and reporting system enhancements. Planning and development of a human resource component to complement the present system is also well under way. Year-end processing related to issuance of T-4s and other issues increased due to the previous year's provincial election.

Each member was provided with a vacation accrual report in January relative to accrued vacation costs for present employees in constituency offices, following direction from the Members' Services Committee. As this was the first accrual report, appropriate tracking and reporting systems were developed and implemented. In addition, similar requests related to employees' entitlements were addressed with both caucus and LAO employees.

Managing salary adjustments was a major component of the branch's emphasis in 1998. Salaries were reinstated, including a return of the unpaid days for those employees who were previously subject to both pay reductions. In addition, achievement bonuses were processed as appropriate. Together, this resulted in two pay reviews involving detailed recalculations of earnings, tax, and pension.

The 5 percent reduction to the MLA indemnity and tax-free allowance and all other related MLA remunerations were reinstated



effective October 1, 1998. As with any similar adjustment human resources responded to questions and queries from the general public. General fact sheets were produced to assist interested parties, and information systems services placed the same information on the Assembly's web site.

HRS continued to liaise with members and government department representatives to initiate, pay, recover and monitor payments made to MLAs on behalf of departments for work on ministerial and government committees. To aid this process, an enhanced on-line tracking system for MLA committee payments was developed and implemented along with invoice and cost-recovery systems. Demands related to committee activity continue to increase.

Members and constituency office employees continue to be one of the primary focuses for the branch, which provides daily advice and assistance in all matters relating to human resource management, including but not limited to salary, wage, and fee-for-service contract administration; pay and benefits management; recruitment; occupational health and safety issues; job classification; employee relations and performance appraisals; training and employee development; and other issues related to attendance, maternity, illness, and workers' compensation leaves. This expertise is also extended to managers and LAO and caucus office employees.

A considerable amount of time and effort was directed to support Assembly issues related to extended illness or accident this year. Ten staff were absent for extended periods because of illness or accident. This resulted in 552 total days absent due to extended illness and 14.5 days related to Workers' Compensation claims. This required both management and staff to stretch resources to continue to meet client expectations with reduced staff levels.

The branch is proud to be among the leaders in Alberta and Canadian Legislatures in the development of an ergonomic program as an enhancement to our workplace wellness. The Assembly's ergonomic committee, with representatives from all branches, developed and implemented a practical program that emphasizes education and awareness using an LAO-developed information brochure, orientation sessions, and individual workstation assessments. The program is expanding to include caucus and constituency staff to continue the Assembly's support of a safe and productive work environment.

Human Resource Services helped co-ordinate LAO office moves, which addressed significant ergonomic concerns and improved the working environment and the staff's ability to provide professional services to all clients. This move was celebrated with an open house in December.

The branch's move from the eighth floor to the ninth floor also allowed staff the opportunity to review internal processes, including file systems and management of employee master files. A major accomplishment was the inventory and transfer to the records centre of 1,600 inactive employee files. A brochure was developed as a result of the move with updated names and numbers and a summary of the Legislative Assembly Office mandate and goals as a practical mail-out and reference tool for our clients and associates.

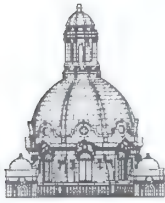
An extensive classification review was conducted for salaried positions in the Visitor

Services section of the Public Information Branch in response to continued changes and developments in that branch. The Visitor Services review compared the six existing positions with similar functions in municipal, provincial, and Canadian Legislature environments.

The LAO welcomed five Quebec/Alberta exchange students for a mutually beneficial experience. The students enjoyed the camaraderie of their colleagues as well as the interaction with staff throughout the LAO. Human Resource Services also managed the summer temporary employment program (STEP) employing 75 employees throughout the constituency, caucus, and LAO offices. In addition the branch co-ordinated the recruitment for 19 competitions, which ranged from volunteers with Visitor Services to replacing the retiring Legislature Librarian. Of the 145 interviews conducted, 45 staff were hired: 35 for sessional and wage assignments including *Hansard*, pages, and guides; six for salary vacancies; and four for illness or maternity leave cover-off. The branch developed a new career opportunity link on the LAO web site that has helped to attract outstanding applicants to positions in the Assembly.

Human Resource Services continued to provide support to the office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner and Ethics Commissioner related to basic pay and benefits administration, particularly during the office's transition to their own payroll and accounting systems effective January 1, 1999.

Along with other branches of the Assembly, HRS shared information and expertise with colleagues from the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, the German delegation from the Partnership of Parliaments, and Mpumalanga Assembly members and staff.



Special Events

Presentation of the Black Rod

On opening day, Tuesday, January 27, 1998, the Assembly moved that it accept a new Black Rod presented by the Alberta-Northwest Territories Command of the Royal Canadian Legion. That same day Speaker Kowalski held a special ceremony in the Legislature Rotunda to commemorate the occasion and officially accept Alberta's new Black Rod. The presentation to the Assembly recognized the Legion's loyalty, service and sacrifice to Sovereign, country, and province. Premier Ralph Klein, Official Opposition Leader Grant Mitchell, and New Democrat opposition leader Pam Barrett offered their remarks. Guests included the Sri Lankan High Commissioner, the British Consul General, members of the Aboriginal and Native Veterans Association, 60 school children from Weinlos school, the RCMP, and bandsmen and soldiers from the Canadian Army Regular and Reserve.

The new, hand-crafted Black Rod presented by the Legion is fashioned from an ebony shaft donated by the government of Sri Lanka. In its base is a 1905 gold sovereign, a gift from the United Kingdom. Sterling silver features include a British lion at the top holding a golden Alberta wild rose with a band of Canadian maple leaves and wild roses below.

In parliamentary tradition the Black Rod is a symbol of authority carried by the Sergeant-at-Arms only when escorting the province's Lieutenant Governor. The Sergeant-at-Arms knocks on the door of the Chamber with it to seek the Assembly's permission for His Honour to enter. When not in use, it is displayed in a case on the third floor of the Legislature Building along with Alberta's Mace.

Flag Day

On February 12 all provincial and territorial flags were displayed on a permanent basis in the Legislature Chamber. Alberta's Chamber thereby became the first in Canada to fly a complete set of Canada's flags.

America Region Presidents Conference, Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie (APF)

On March 9 the Assembly hosted this meeting of francophone parliamentarians in Edmonton. Alberta became an associate member of the AIPLF in 1998. For additional details see page 35.

Swearing-in of new Ombudsman

On Wednesday, March 25, 1998, Mr. G.G.S. (Scott) Sutton was sworn in as Alberta's sixth Ombudsman. Speaker Kowalski presided at the ceremony, which was held in the Carillon Room of the Legislature Building. A reception followed, attended by members and staff of the Legislative Assembly and Mr. Sutton's friends and family. Mr. Sutton officially began his duties on April 1.

Page Speech Competition

Each year a speech competition for the page development program is held. The three winners of the May 20, 1998, competition sponsored by TransAlta were Tim Jolly (first place), Melanie Ransum (second place), and Simone Godbout (third place).

Canada Day

On Canada Day for the first time visitors were welcome to walk on the floor of the Chamber. They were hosted by several guides, including some wearing replica ceremonial parliamentary robes. Working with the local Edmonton Canada Day committee, the Assembly received extensive publicity for this event. More than 6,000 came to the Legislature and the pedway.

Annual Klondike Days Breakfast

More than 1,000 people came to the Legislature Grounds on July 25 for the Legislative Assembly's Klondike Days breakfast. Several MLAs and LAO staff assisted.

Historic Edmonton Week

The Assembly organized special tours of the Legislature Building and a presentation during Historic Edmonton Week, July 26 to August 3, 1998. Edmonton author Ken Tingley made a presentation based on his book *The Path of Duty: The Wartime Letters of Mr. Bramley-Moore*. Bramley-Moore was a Member of the Legislature prior to military service during World War I. He was killed in action.

Remembrance Day Ceremonies

On October 28 in the Legislature Rotunda the Alberta-Northwest Territories Command of the Royal Canadian Legion launched their poppy campaign by presenting poppies to His Honour The Honourable H.A. "Bud" Olson, Deputy Speaker Don Tannas, and representatives from government and opposition caucuses.

On November 9 Speaker Kowalski, the Hon. David Hancock, Minister of Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs, opposition leader Nancy MacBeth, and New Democrat opposition leader Pam Barrett participated in a wreath laying ceremony on behalf of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta. The Canadian Corps of Commissioners, Alberta Union of Provincial Employees, and a grade 6 student on behalf of students throughout the province laid wreaths in memory of those civil servants who gave their lives in World War I, World War II and the Korean War.

CPA Regional Seminar

Alberta hosted the 21st Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) regional seminar, held November 20 to 22. Elected representatives from the federal Parliament and the Legislatures of all but two provinces along with table officers took part in business sessions held in the Chamber. See page 42 for additional details.

Swearing-in of Chief Electoral Officer

On Monday, November 30, 1998, Mr. Brian Fjeldheim was sworn-in as Alberta's fourth Chief Electoral Officer. Speaker Kowalski presided at the ceremony, which was held in the Carillon Room of the Legislature Building. A reception followed, attended by Members and staff of the Legislative Assembly and Mr. Fjeldheim's friends and family.

Christmas at the Legislature

On December 3 Premier Ralph Klein and Speaker Kowalski delivered Christmas messages to the public in the Rotunda as part of the festivities preceding the annual Christmas light-up ceremony. The program included singing by the University of Alberta mixed chorus and featured the official unveiling of the Alberta 2000 logo and slogan, a program co-ordinated by the Department of Community Development. The unveiling involved original presentations by school children from the Edmonton area on the theme of the new millennium. After the Premier switched on the outdoor Christmas lights on the Legislature Grounds, hot chocolate and shortbread were served in the Legislature Rotunda.

The 1998 Christmas season featured more evening openings than in 1997 as well as choir performances at noon, in the evening, and on selected weekends. For most of these evenings, over 300 visitors came to the Legislature to see the lights, hear the choirs, and view a pedway full of over 80 gingerbread houses, dozens of trees decorated by local school groups, and a display of sleighs on loan from Fort Edmonton and the Remington Carriage Centre. The gingerbread houses were donated by Safeway and Save-On Foods and constructed by schoolchildren from all parts of the Edmonton region. Staff volunteers judged their handiwork and awarded prizes to the best and most original houses. Another Christmas-related function was the third annual staff craft sale in the pedway, which was well received once again.

Staff Recognition Dinner

On December 3, LAO staff gathered in the pedway to mark the past year's accomplishments at the annual staff recognition dinner hosted by Speaker Kowalski. Awards were presented to staff with five, 10, 15, and 20 years of service.



Former Members of the Legislative Assembly

Obituaries

Mr. John Drobot

July 3, 1926 to January 17, 1998

Mr. Drobot was first elected on November 2, 1982, and served until June, 14, 1993, representing the constituency of St. Paul for the Progressive Conservative Party. During his years of service, Mr. Drobot served on the following committees: Law and Regulations; Legislative Offices; Private Bills; Privileges and Elections, Standing Orders and Printing; Public Accounts; and Public Affairs. He was appointed to the Special Ombudsman Search Committee in 1989, served on the Standing Policy Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development, and was Chairman of the Special Committee of the Government Caucus for the Decentralization of Government Operations.

Dr. John Walker

October 30, 1927 to June 5, 1998

Dr. Walker represented the constituency of Macleod for the Progressive Conservative Party. He was first elected on March 26, 1975, and served until March 14, 1979. During his years at the Legislature he served on the Standing Committees on Privileges and Elections and Law and Regulations, the caucus Standing Committee on Legislation, and the caucus special committees on Airport Development, Irrigation, and Legislative Strategy.

Mr. Robert Simpson

April 5, 1910 to September 24, 1998

Mr. Simpson represented the constituency of Calgary-North for the Social Credit Party. Mr. Simpson was first elected in the general election held on July 17, 1963, and served until 1971. During his years of service Mr. Simpson served on the following select standing committees: Municipal Law and Law Amendments, Public Accounts, Privileges and Elections, Standing Orders and Printing, and Public Affairs.



Commonwealth Parliamentary Association

Alberta Branch

1998 Annual Report



Commonwealth Parliamentary Association

The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) is an association of members of Commonwealth parliaments who, irrespective of race, religion, or culture, are united by community of interest, respect for the rule of law, and individual rights and freedoms, and by pursuit of the positive ideals of parliamentary democracy. Canada was one of the six original member countries of the CPA when it was founded in 1911 under the name of the Empire Parliamentary Association. Association branches now exist in 134 national, state, provincial, and territorial parliaments with a total membership of over 14,000 parliamentarians. Each provincial and territorial Legislative Assembly in Canada as well as the federal Parliament comprises a branch of the CPA. All Members of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta are members of the Alberta branch of the CPA.

President's Report

Speaker Ken Kowalski, President of the Alberta Branch of the CPA

During my first year and a half as Speaker I have had the privilege of completing Speaker Schumacher's term on the Executive Committee of the CPA and attending numerous parliamentary conferences. This has enabled me to establish contacts with many parliamentarians from all over the world and has reinforced my strongly held view that interparliamentary contact is essential in order for us as elected people to represent our constituents effectively and to fully appreciate the value of our own parliamentary democracy.

It is no longer good enough, if it ever was, for us to make decisions based simply on our own experience or opinions or those of our constituents. In these last years of the second millennium we live in a world so shaped by mass communications and electronic technology that we truly have become a global village. In terms of economics and culture and in many other ways we are connected to people of every race, creed, and occupation in the villages of Swaziland and the factories of Malaysia as well as in the Canadian Arctic, the outposts of Newfoundland, and all across Canada. The CPA helps make us more

aware of the larger, global context we live in so that we can make better decisions at the provincial level and in our constituencies.

The beauty of the CPA is that when we meet with our counterparts from other parts of Canada or of the world, we encounter another elected person who faces many of the same issues we do, and we are able to share with them our respective viewpoints on those issues. When we talk with them about health care, agricultural marketing, education, unemployment, or the administration of justice, we learn more about what it means to be human in the 1990s, and we gain invaluable insights into how we can and should address these and other issues in Alberta and in our constituencies. These encounters can even have an impact on issues as serious as world peace and the exploitation of children.

Members who attend CPA functions or any other interparliamentary meetings are always amazed that they can establish good relationships and even friendships with members who belong to parties holding views that conflict with their own. This occurs because at such gatherings we all come as equals and without labels. We know that an effective

way to reach beyond the rigid separatist position of a Quebec government, for example, is to meet individual Quebecers, to build bridges at a personal level. Interparliamentary organizations like the CPA enable us to do something similar in a broader context. For example, I attended an executive meeting in 1998 with representatives from India and Pakistan who were able to work together even as their governments were testing nuclear weapons and threatening war. Another meeting addressed the issue of child labour, and despite extreme cultural and economic differences, we were able to work together in finding solutions.

In 1998 Alberta became an associate member of the APF, *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie*, thereby enabling us to establish closer ties with francophones in Quebec and other parts of Canada as well as around the world. We hosted the America region presidents' meeting here in Edmonton, and many members had the opportunity to meet the participants. We also hosted the CPA

regional seminar in November, which was attended by 40 visitors and seven of our own members.

In June we participated for the first time in the Partnership of Parliaments program by hosting elected members from state legislatures in Germany. In November a delegation from our twinned province in South Africa, Mpumalanga, visited the Legislature. We were thereby able to learn from and share experiences with people from a long-established democratic tradition as well as with those from a country just starting to develop its democratic institutions. In future these two special relationships with Germany and Mpumalanga will offer members and staff from all the involved jurisdictions continuing opportunities to deepen their appreciation of our parliamentary democratic institutions and thereby to improve those institutions and to make the institutions and all of us more fully human.

Secretary's Report

W.J. David McNeil, Secretary of the Alberta Branch of the CPA and Clerk of the Legislative Assembly

In 1998 the Alberta branch participated in seven conferences, two of which we hosted in Edmonton. The branch also hosted a delegation of members of German state legislatures and a delegation of Assembly officers from Mpumalanga, South Africa. The most noteworthy new venture for the branch was its being granted associate member status in the francophone parliamentary association, *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie* (APF). To highlight this event, which had been in the works for several years, the Alberta branch invited the executive of the APF to hold its meeting in Edmonton in March. On that occasion, Speaker Kowalski hosted a lunch and a dinner for the association, thereby providing the opportunity for a total of 24 members to learn more about this association and to meet with members of the executive.

For the first time Alberta participated in the Partnership of Parliaments program, an initiative designed to foster exchange visits of parliamentarians between U.S. and Canadian jurisdictions and Germany. In June Alberta hosted parliamentarians from German state legislatures, and members and support staff were able to enhance their parliamentary experience by numerous discussions and meetings with our German visitors.

In November the Speaker, Deputy Speaker, Clerk, Clerk Assistant, committee administrative assistant, and editor of *Hansard* from the province of Mpumalanga, South Africa, made an extended visit to Edmonton to learn from Alberta's experience on a wide variety of issues, including financial management, committee administration, production of *Hansard*, human resources support, parliamentary procedure, library services, technology, et cetera. This visit gave a significant number of staff and members the opportunity to broaden their perspectives on the issues affecting parliaments and parliamentarians in other parts of the world. It was one in a series of contacts between the Legislatures of Alberta and Mpumalanga, the province of South Africa with which Alberta has been twinned for several years.

I was able to attend several parliamentary conferences during the year, including the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Plenary Conference in New Zealand in October, at which I participated in the Association of Clerks-at-the-Table in Commonwealth Parliaments, which was part of the plenary conference. In December I had the honour of serving on the CPA's Expert Group on Innovative Training Methods for Parliamentarians.

Presiding Officers' Conference

Victoria, British Columbia, January 15-18

Conference Agenda

- 1 The Speaker's latitude as an MLA
- 2 Structure and operation of the parliamentary committee system
- 3 Issues relating to private members' business
- 4 Speaker's private consultations re the business of the House, procedural and decorum issues

- 5 Oxford-style debate: parliamentary reform, the prerogative of the caucuses, not of Speakers or officers of the House
- 6 How a ruling is prepared

Alberta Delegation

Speaker Ken Kowalski
Clerk David McNeil

America Region Presidents Conference Assemblée de la parlementaires de la Francophonie (APF)

Edmonton, Alberta, March 9

Conference Agenda

- 1 Review of key points from board meeting in Guadeloupe, December 1997
- 2 Replacement of the positions of the representatives from America region and office members of the AIPLF
- 3 Report of the representative on the activities of the America region, September 1997 to March 1998

- 4 Discussion of Regional Assembly agenda for August 1998

Alberta Delegation

Speaker Ken Kowalski
MLA Paul Langevin
Clerk Assistant Louise Kamuchik

10th Annual CPA Seminar

Prince Edward Island, May 21-30

Conference Agenda

- 1 Development of the Commonwealth and the role of the CPA: looking to the future
- 2 The various roles of a member: obligations to constituents and party and relationships with interest groups
- 3 Powers and privileges of the Legislature
- 4 The business of the House: striking the parliamentary agenda and balancing the requirements of government and opposition
- 5 The role of the Speaker and parliamentary staff
- 6 Enhancing parliament's scrutiny of legislation and public expenditure through

parliamentary committees and committee systems

- 7 Private members and their relationship with the executive and the civil service
- 8 Remuneration, allowances, and support services for members
- 9 Members and the media
- 10 Conflict of interest: how to ensure ethical standards in public life
- 11 Parliamentary sovereignty versus judicial activism: conflict or complement?

Alberta Delegation

MLA Carol Haley

Delegate's Report (edited for length)

Thirty-two delegates attended, representing India, Pakistan, Australia, Canada, the U.K., South Africa, Kenya, eight island countries, and several other members of the CPA.

I learned much about our differences: constituencies that range from 2,000 residents to 1.2 million, constituencies that have no roads, no schools, and no health care versus our own very fortunate existence. Constituency support levels varied widely, many with none at all.

What amazed me most is that we as parliamentarians have so much in common: concerns about how politicians are viewed, problems with the

media, and wrestling with conflict of interest legislation.

In May 1998 India and Pakistan were both detonating underground nuclear test weapons. In Charlottetown delegates from Pakistan and India were able to sit next to one another and discuss this situation calmly and rationally, leaving the tension at home.

I think the CPA has much to offer the world when it can bring people together from such diverse areas to share ideas and concerns.

Carol Haley

Partnership of Parliaments

Edmonton, Jasper, and Kananaskis, June 7 to 11

Speaker Kowalski and the Legislative Assembly of Alberta hosted a team of 15 German visitors, including parliamentarians from 10 states in Germany. This was Alberta's first opportunity to participate in the Partnership of Parliaments program, an initiative designed to foster closer ties between German parliamentarians and their counterparts in Canada and the United States. The agenda included meetings with Premier

Klein, Edmonton Mayor Bill Smith, and several cabinet ministers and the opportunity to meet numerous other MLAs. The program was designed to enable participants to exchange information and experience with respect to fiscal and economic challenges, social and cultural issues, energy, the environment, and political and parliamentary relations.

National Ombudsman Conference

Yellowknife, N.W.T., June 18-21

Conference Theme

Fairness and Good Governance

Alberta Delegation

MLA Paul Langevin

Diane Shumyla, Committee Assistant

Ombudsman Scott Sutton

Daniel Johns, Assistant to the Ombudsman

Information and Privacy Commission Summit

Whitehorse, Yukon, June 24-28

Alberta Delegation

MLA Paul Langevin

Information and Privacy Commissioner

Bob Clark

CPA Canadian Regional Conference

Toronto, Ontario, July 18-24

Conference Agenda

- 1 Correcting past wrongs: when is it the government's responsibility?
- 2 Conflict of interest guidelines: too little or too much?
- 3 Will referenda make government more accountable?
- 4 Parliament and the courts: who's legislating whom?
- 5 Year 2000 and technology: are we ready?
- 6 Have the public and government abandoned the environmental file?

- 7 The creation of Canada's two new territories
- 8 Pollsters, the press, and political winds of fortune

Alberta Delegation

Speaker Ken Kowalski

MLAs Jocelyn Burgener, Debby Carlson, Robert Fischer, Sue Olsen, Gary Severtson, and Janis Tarchuk

Clerk David McNeil

Bev Alenius, Speaker's Executive Assistant

Delegates' Reports (edited for length)

In the absence of specific professional development courses for elected officials, I found the opportunity to meet with elected officials from the 10 provinces, two territories, House of Commons, and Senate as well as international delegates to be a productive and informative experience.

The agenda covered a range of topics and the format of presentations, followed by questions and responses, allowed for an informed debate. Within the context of nation building and a mutual understanding of our social and economic diversity,

those debates were quite meaningful.

I was privileged to chair on behalf of the Alberta delegation the session on conflict of interest. Alberta has continued to lead the country on specific areas of fiscal and social reform. The CPA provided an opportunity to feature our Alberta advantage.

I appreciate the Speaker's initiative in maintaining a priority for Alberta legislators to participate in conferences such as these.

Jocelyn Burgener

This conference was one of the highlights of my elected career. The CPA is to be congratulated on providing a forum where elected representatives can gather in a nonpartisan fashion and work on professional development and building bridges between parties and provinces. This is a very important goal, and it is encouraging to see the Speaker play a significant role in achieving this goal.

I found all of the working sessions to be very informative and would certainly be willing to be a presenter at a future conference. Equally important

was the ability to meet informally with other legislators. I gained as much information from our informal discussions as I did from the formal part of the program.

It was a real pleasure to be able to bring my children to the conference. As legislators we spend a great deal of time away from home, and there are many things they are not included in. They are also isolated from their peers as few children have had the experience of having parents as politicians.

Debby Carlson

As well as finding the conference enjoyable and very rewarding, I appreciated the many benefits of networking with parliamentarians representing provincial and territorial legislatures, the Parliament of Canada, and other Commonwealth nations.

The organizers did a wonderful job hosting delegates and constructing working sessions that promoted open exchanges of ideas on important social, political, and economic issues of the day.

While discussing these issues common to all, there was much to be learned from different experiences and perspectives contributing to various approaches to problem solving. Whether in a social environment or working session, dialogue was always stimulating and enhanced better understanding of our many shared challenges.

Janis Tarchuk

I believe conferences such as these are the only manner Alberta MLAs have for professional development and networking opportunities. I would encourage all Members of the Legislative Assembly to participate not just as a delegate but as a presenter.

I was also grateful for the opportunity to bring my son. Sometimes we overlook the impact our chosen profession has on our children. This gave Blake a chance to meet other youths whose parents

are also parliamentarians and to share some of the experiences he has had. They also were able to see their parents meet with others in a nonpartisan environment.

I believe the most timely presentations were on conflict of interest legislation and "Parliament and the courts: who's legislating whom?" I had the opportunity to present on the latter topic.

Sue Olsen

The conference was very interesting in that the business sessions were filled with high-level discussions on parliamentary systems within the Commonwealth. Ontario did a superb job of hosting the conference.

Marian and I thoroughly enjoyed this conference

as we made many new friends. Certainly the deliberations in the business sessions were informative and gave us a special appreciation for democracy in the province of Alberta.

Robert "Butch" Fischer

The conference was very well organized, and the topics for discussion were well chosen. I found the business sessions to be most informative, and the opportunity for exchange of ideas afforded a great learning experience.

I found it particularly interesting to note how the tones and viewpoints on different issues varied

between government members and representatives of opposition parties. I thoroughly enjoyed this conference and believe the knowledge I gained and the experiences I shared will be of benefit to me throughout my political career.

Gary Severtson

Summary of Alberta Presentation

Parliament and the Courts: Who's Legislating Whom? by Sue Olsen

Many citizens are asking whether the courts have become policymakers by the way they have been interpreting the law. Since the adoption of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms in 1982, the concept of judicial activism has gained prominence. In fact, the primary reason for including section 33 in the Charter, the notwithstanding clause, was to ensure that public policy was determined by elected legislators rather than by unelected judges.

A major event in Alberta in 1998 was the Supreme Court's decision in the Delwin Vriend case on the issue of sexual orientation. The Premier decided not to invoke the notwithstanding clause to override the decision despite deep divisions in his party's caucus and strong lobbying by interest groups. The court's decision basically demonstrated that our Constitution must evolve to reflect current trends in our society. It also underlined that the Constitution, not the courts, limits Legislatures and that "this is necessarily true of all constitutional democracies."

Unfortunately, with the growing concentration

of media ownership, the media is more interested in creating discord than agreement, and so only the more controversial decisions get the headlines. So the public has only unreliable, often one-sided information on which to base its opinions. This is the context in which governments are receiving increased pressure to elect judges in order to make the judiciary more accountable to the electorate. However, governments that bow to this pressure will have to explain why this type of accountability should be limited to the judiciary and not also include quasi-judicial bodies like human rights commissions and regional health authorities.

I believe that if legislators or parliamentarians apply an equality lens to any pending legislation, we will reduce the ambiguities. Then the interpretative role of the judiciary is made that much easier and will become more accepted by the citizens of this country. The important question to ask, then, is: do our legislators have the political will to rule in the best interests of society rather than the best interests of re-election?

National Conference of State Legislatures

Las Vegas, Nevada, July 20-23

Alberta Delegation

MLAs Marlene Graham, Pamela Paul,
and Tom Thurber

Delegates' Reports (edited for length)

I found the information from the conference very innovative and exciting in terms of being able to compare what we are doing in the province of Alberta to what we are doing across Canada and what is being done in the States. There were 7,000 preregistered delegates and 130 international delegates at the convention. I participated in an open discussion on communication and media relations at the beginning of the conference with other delegates from Egypt, South Africa, Japan, Germany, China, and California. I also attended a number of sessions dealing with welfare reform. There were 11 of us in the group, and we were able to share all sorts of information on state policies and reforms. I was

I was very impressed with both the quality and number of sessions contained on the program. The presenters were all very knowledgeable. I was also struck by the similarity of issues facing American Legislatures and those we face in our own country. Of particular interest to me were the sessions I attended on child support enforcement, the prevalence and impact of substance abuse in crime and the effect of current policy in this area, the implications of the current robust economy, and the need for legislatures to promote civic education in schools to help preserve our democratic system.

At this time the federal and state governments have a combined surplus of \$160 billion. We were

State representatives and Senators had organized meetings to develop policy on many items, such as the Kyoto accord, agriculture policies, and social programs. The meetings I attended were mostly on environment and agriculture. Preservation of agricultural land, intensive livestock operations, and the protection of the environment were key issues in many discussions. It became very apparent that all participants face basically the same problems that we

asked if I would be interested in taking part in an international women's initiative. I also had an opportunity to meet delegates from Germany on a number of occasions. It was easy to relate to them, and they were very open in sharing ideas with me.

I found the overall experience exciting and very enjoyable. Although it was informative to be present under observer status, in the future it may be more effective to be able to participate in the actual discussions. Perhaps next time some consideration for our active participation could be arranged with the host organization.

Pamela Paul

told this was unexpected and came from capital gains tax revenue occasioned by the doubling of the stock market. Most jurisdictions are having to decide how to best utilize these surpluses.

Alberta and Quebec were the only Canadian provinces represented at the conference. I believe we should continue to maintain our connections to the NCSL and send delegates annually. Not only is the conference informative; it serves to provide a venue to give Alberta a greater profile.

Marlene Graham

face here, with different solutions according to the different legislation of the different states.

My impression was that American states lobby their federal government much more actively than we do. They appear to get state senators and representatives together on a wide basis to get their opinions heard at the federal level.

Tom Thurber

19th Annual Conference of the Canadian Council of Public Accounts Committees and Conference of Legislative Auditors

Yellowknife, N.W.T., August 16-18, 1999

Conference Agenda

- 1 Report of the Planning and Co-ordinating Committee on strategic planning for COLA
- 2 Legislative Audit Practices Committee (LAPC) update and planned activities
- 3 Intranet/Internet issues
- 4 Government accounting standards: where are we going?
- 5 Joint session with CCPAC delegates: governments moving into the third millennium

- 6 Study groups on performance management for audit offices reporting and public-sector accountability (performance reporting)

Alberta Delegation

MLAs Shiraz Shariff and Lance White
Corinne Dacyshyn, Committee Assistant
Auditor General Peter Valentine
Assistant Auditor Generals Nick Shandro and Jim Hug

Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie (APF)

Ottawa, Ontario, August 18-23

Conference Agenda

- 1 Political and parliamentary actuality in the various sections
- 2 The evolution of public libraries in the maintenance of French language and culture in America
- 3 Labour's professional and developmental formation

Alberta Delegation

Speaker Ken Kowalski
MLAs Paul Langevin and
Denis Ducharme
Clerk Assistant Louise Kamuchik

Delegates' Reports (edited for length)

The opening session included the official welcome of Alberta as an associate member of the international Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie. This included President Senator Jean-Robert Gauthier's presenting to Speaker Kowalski the organization's flag. Speaker Kowalski then addressed the gathering in French and pledged Alberta's active participation in the organization.

The Alberta delegation made a presentation at the business session dealing with the evolution of public libraries in the maintenance of the French language and culture. Resolutions were passed to recommend that governments abolish all taxes on books and to recommend that public broadcasters and community radio and television stations air

messages encouraging francophones to frequent their public libraries. The delegation also presented on the subject of the professional formation and development of labour.

The APF is the sole interparliamentary organization representing the French-speaking world which brings together parliamentarians interested in defending and promoting French language and culture in totally or partially French-speaking areas of the American continent. Its work is especially important in areas where French is in the minority.

Paul Langevin and Denis Ducharme

Summaries of Alberta Presentations

The Evolution of Public Libraries in the Maintenance of French Language and Culture in Alberta by Paul Langevin and Denis Ducharme

Library services in Alberta began as voluntary operations, and until the 1950s few communities other than the larger cities established municipal, taxpayer-funded library services. A major step forward in the provision of French language materials came with the introduction of Alberta's multilingual biblioservice in 1978, which purchased books in 27 languages, including French. However, this service was discontinued in 1993 due to lack of funding.

Public libraries in major centres have maintained modest French language collections, and many school boards have developed French language collections as their French immersion and second language programs developed during the 1970s and

1980s. Unfortunately, the number of adults accessing French language materials has been declining. Recently, Alberta has begun to implement the Alberta public library electronic network. When fully operational, Albertans will be able to borrow French materials from any public library in the province.

As helpful as the Internet is to the effort, francophones and francophiles face major challenges in combating illiteracy and purchasing technology and materials in order to maintain and promote French language and culture in Alberta. They need the co-operation and support of elected officials from all levels of government.

The Professional Formation and Development of Labour: a Francophone Perspective by Paul Langevin and Denis Ducharme

Alberta remains committed to respecting the constitutional rights of francophones and Catholics to a separate education system. Overall spending in education is increasing by 5.7 percent in the current year and by 3.1 percent in Advanced Education and Career Development. In order to maintain its competitive advantage in a knowledge-based, global economy, Alberta must give education and training top priority. Growth summit participants identified people development as the number one priority.

Alberta has developed a new human resource strategy, established a renewed vision for apprenticeship and industry training, expanded youth programs, integrated provincial and federal labour market programs, increased adult learning support, and developed alternative certification mechanisms consistent with the agreement on internal trade.

Faculté Saint-Jean of the University of Alberta is

the only francophone postsecondary institution west of Winnipeg. In addition to numerous regular programs, it offers courses and programs in French for adult learners and a tutoring service for adults and children. The Northern Alberta Institute of Technology offers a paid work experience program in co-operation with Faculté Saint-Jean. Albertans also have access to several other private- and public-sector education and training programs and initiatives.

Many partners are involved in ensuring Albertans have access to the learning and training opportunities they seek. It is important that all partners work together to support people development as a priority so that all Albertans can contribute to and share in Alberta's prosperity.

The Council on Governmental Ethics Laws Annual Conference

Seattle, Washington, September 13-16

Alberta Delegation

MLAs Paul Langevin and Howard
Sapers
Diane Shumyla, Committee Assistant
Information and Privacy Commissioner
Bob Clark

Frank Work and Karen South from the
Information and Privacy
Commissioner's office

Summary of Delegates' Report

The conference did not seem to have one theme, but the Council on Governmental Ethics Laws, COGEL, is a professional organization for government agencies, organizations, and individuals with responsibilities or interests in government ethics, elections, campaign finance, lobby law, open public meetings, and records regulation. A broad range of topics in those areas was discussed.

CPA Plenary Conference

Wellington, New Zealand, October 13-23

Conference Agenda

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1 How can Commonwealth governments and parliaments act as a catalyst for good governance in the face of international economic pressures?2 Maintaining accountability to parliament in an era of corporatization and privatization3 How can the Commonwealth assist in the protection and development of national and regional cultures in the face of increasingly globalized communications and entertainment?4 Empowerment of women in politics and decision-making: can sustained gains be | <ol style="list-style-type: none">5 made?5 Be it resolved: first past the post is an undemocratic electoral system which should be replaced by some form of proportional representation6 The Commonwealth's role in representing the interests of its more vulnerable members, including overseas territories, and the importance of foreign aid in alleviating poverty |
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Alberta Delegation

Speaker Ken Kowalski
Clerk David McNeil

CPA Regional Seminar

Edmonton, Alberta, November 20-22

Conference Agenda

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1 The Alberta economic outlook – soft landing or continued expansion: things that go bump in the night2 The role of the private member in government3 Making a difference: private members' business in Alberta | <ol style="list-style-type: none">4 Proportional representation |
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Alberta Delegation

Speaker Ken Kowalski
Deputy Speaker Don Tannas
MLAs Mike Cardinal, Gary Dickson,
Carol Haley and Howard Sapers
Clerk David McNeil

Summary of Alberta Presentation

Private members' business: can the private member make a difference? by Gary Dickson and Don Tannas

Since Standing Order reforms in 1993 Alberta's private members have had much more impact on the business of the Assembly. Considerably more time has been designated for private members' public bills, and 15 have been passed. There have been free votes and considerable co-operation among members and across party lines. However, relaxing fairly rigid party discipline is still perceived to be a challenge at least in some cases.

Nonetheless, despite the reforms and the

empowerment of the private member the chances of opposition bills passing are still low; all of the 15 bills passed since the reforms were sponsored by private government members. The reason for this is that government members' bills tend to focus on narrow issues which don't challenge government policy, but opposition bills generally reflect caucus priorities and party policy and are usually more wide ranging.

Delegation from the Legislative Assembly of Mpumalanga, South Africa

Edmonton, November 23-26

The Mpumalanga delegation included the Speaker, Deputy Speaker, Acting Secretary (Clerk), Deputy Director of Parliamentary Proceedings, the head of *Hansard*, and a committee clerk. Funded under the Canadian International Development Agency's (CIDA) Canada-South Africa program on governance, this visit was a result of the long-term twinning relationship begun in 1995 between Alberta and Mpumalanga. This relationship was established to help the newly created province establish its parliamentary democratic institutions and the related

administrative structures.

The delegation studied the operation of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta and discussed with Alberta counterparts financial systems and controls, committee practices, human and financial resources management, the framework of rules and regulations under which the Assembly operates, and other related issues. The program included meetings with Speaker Kowalski, several MLAs, the table officers, LAO managers, and other staff.

Bursary Award Winners/CPA Essay Contest Winner

Bursaries are presented annually to nominees from TUXIS and the Alberta Girls' Parliament to increase interest in parliament among young Albertans. On May 21 Mr. Don Tannas, MLA and Deputy Speaker, presented bursaries to Brendan Brown from TUXIS and to Hanna Davis and Vithya Gnanakumar from the Alberta Girls' Parliament.

A provincewide essay contest is held annually for grade 6 students to encourage greater awareness of the Commonwealth and the parliamentary system. This year the grand prize went to Dan Piche.

Visiting Delegates

The Speaker, Deputy Speaker, Deputy Chairman of Committees and staff of the Legislative Assembly Office are involved in ongoing liaison with members and staff of other parliaments and with representatives from foreign countries. In 1998 they hosted or met with the following visitors.

January 21	His Excellency Stanislav Chýlek, Ambassador of Czech Republic	May 13	Forum for Young Albertans
January 22	Her Excellency A. Missouri Sherman-Peter, High Commissioner of the Bahamas	May 26	Mr. Vyacheslav F. Medvedev, Deputy Governor of Tyumen Oblast
January 28	Mr. Brian Austin, Former British Consul General	May 27	His Excellency Gregory Wood, Australia High Commissioner
February 3	His Excellency Gordon D. Giffin, Ambassador for USA	May 29	His Excellency Dr. Emil Constantinescu, President of Romania
February 17	His Excellency Vladimir P. Kuramin, Chairman of the State Committee of Russian Federation on Development of the North (Goskomsever of Russia)	June 23	Mr. Peter Maier-Oswald, German Consul General
March 4	University of Alberta fourth year political science students	August 25	Her Highness Princess Zahra Aga Khan, Pakistan
March 19	British Parliamentarian Delegation	August 26	IAVE Executive Board 15 th Biennial World Volunteer Conference
March 25/26	The Hon. Sam Gargan, Speaker of the Northwest Territories and Delegation	September 23	Mr. Gu Huaming, Consul General of The People's Republic of China
March 26	Speaker Vasily Fillipov, Sakha Republic, Russia	September 24	Monarchist League of Canada
March 30	Alberta Girls' Parliament	October 2	His Excellency Tang Jiaxuan, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China
March 31	His Excellency José Tomas Letelier, Ambassador of the Republic of Chile	November 9	His Excellency Sunai Bunyasiriphant, Ambassador of Thailand
April 6	His Excellency Luc Carbonez, Ambassador of Belgium	November 19	Hon. Franklin Pitura, Manitoba Minister of Government Services, Responsible for Emergency Management Organization
April 20	His Excellency José Manuel Duarte de Jesus, Ambassador of Portugal	November 23	His Excellency Sándor Papp, Ambassador of the Republic of Hungary
April 22	Mr. Walter Suter, Consul General of Switzerland	November 25	Her Excellency June Yvonne Clarke, High Commissioner for Barbados
		December 10	Austin O'Brien high school students

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